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A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

VOLUME II

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A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

BY

CHARLES GUIGNEBERT

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

Translated by

F. G. RICHMOND

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A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

VOLUME II

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

CHAPTER XVIII

THE DETERMINATION OF MODERN FRANCE: THE RENAISSANCE

I

The Renaissance.

Definition

IT has been said for a long time and often that the Italian wars did this great service to France: that at a time when she was still plunged in the semi-barbarism and the somnolence of the Middle Ages, they revealed to her a higher culture than her own and thus induced that great revival of thought, letters and arts which is justly named the *Renaissance*. These ideas, too simple to be true and originating in the somewhat naive enthusiasm of the generation born in the first half of the sixteenth century, and believing that all about them was being regenerated,[1] no longer call for refutation. Yet it is true that the French were profoundly influenced by their prolonged contact with the Italians after 1494; that the resultant reactions were important, and that the effects of these did much to change the "spirit" of the country.

The Italian Renaissance

From the beginning of the fourteenth century onwards a movement of the highest interest had begun in Italy, and had produced, in the course of that century and the next, a profound transformation in the domains of thought, literature and art. This movement was characterised both by a return to the study of antiquity and by stricter application to the observation of nature. In the departments of thought and of literature, the restoration of Greek culture, the extension of Latin culture, furthered by research based on ancient manuscripts, had given birth to *humanism*,[2] which concerned itself with all that had attracted the curiosity or the reflection of the ancients. In the department of art, under all its forms, the attentive and methodical study of numerous monuments and other works in the possession of Italy, whose many known examples were rapidly added to by active investigation, had resulted in the *Renaissance* properly so called, by which is to be understood a new or renewed representation of beauty in architecture and the plastic arts, and the invention of technical devices different from those which had sufficed for the Middle Ages. Aesthetic and technique were transformed together.

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[1] *"Réveil de la science morte"* (*the raising of science from the dead*) wrote Ronsard in an *Ode* in 1550 expressing a current opinion of his circle.

Humanism

The arts

Conditions which favoured the Renaissance in Italy

Humanism and the Renaissance found a propitious soil for germination and development in the Italian Peninsula, a country enriched by commerce, and politically much divided, which abounded in *amateurs*, who fostered both humanists and artists, partly from real love for the beautiful and partly from personal pride. The towns, too, and the little States themselves were equally jealous in an equally fruitful rivalry. The greater abundance, too, in Italy than elsewhere of ruins and antiquities and her neighbourhood to the Byzantine world must be taken into account. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 sent her many Greek scholars under whom the Hellenic language and literature became rapidly better understood. Nevertheless, favoured by fortune as the Italian cultural revival was, this fact explains its beginnings in the fourteenth century—it was neither a limited nor an isolated whole in itself;

---

[2] This word was applied by German scholars of the time of the Renaissance to their studies, which they believed to be exceptionally suited to make of a man all that a man should be—they made it the fashion and it lasted.

it was part of a wider evolution which little by little transformed the civilisation of the Middle Ages and slowly and confusedly established a new spirit in the Western World.

The French pre-Renaissance

In the same way it is possible to discern in France a highly interesting movement in the life of the mind and of art, which may be justly considered as attached to the Renaissance, or if it be preferred as constituting a French pre-Renaissance, anterior to the Italian wars. It is none the less true that the influence of Italy, from the time when it was freely exercised upon this still confused and indefinite transformation, accentuated, defined and above all determined its direction. It has been generally agreed to place the Renaissance in the sixteenth century, this being the period during which its development and organisation laid the real intellectual and artistic foundations of modern France.

II

The culture of France at the end of the fifteenth century

At the end of the fifteenth century the mental and spiritual life of France needed no *rebirth*, for it had never died. Since the end of the Hundred Years' War the desire to learn, the determination to repair the accumulated ruin of these unhappy years, zest for the delights of the eye and of the mind, the love of luxury and refinement had all spontaneously acquired fresh vigour. This tendency to react against the calamities of the war is, indeed, the one which most vividly impresses the historian who considers the society of the time.

A. *The facts*

Thought

In the Universities, thought is active if not always fruitful; their decadence, which runs parallel with that of the scholastic philosophy, does not preclude their perseverance in the speculative researches and dialectical construction which were their glory in the past. The thought of the *Masters* has still an entirely religious orientation and is more reminiscent of the past than prophetic of the future; but it still lives and has faith in itself. A literature exists, which has an interest of its

Letters

own, though it never produced any very great masterpieces. *Villon* is a true poet and a great one in spite of his inequalities; *Commynes* is a writer of the highest merit; theatrical production, in mysteries, moralities,[3] "sotties," farces, attests by its abundance at any rate the place which it holds among current diversions and the *farce of Patelin* is a pleasing work even to an audience of today. This literature, original in the sense that it derives entirely from the French mind as moulded by the Middle Ages, is religious and popular in inspiration. Undoubtedly it falls too often into *artificiality and mere convention.* It may even be maintained that it is only by exceptional individual gifts that it can be raised above this level, and it is easy to make fun of the turgid, pedantic and empty fatuity of the *rhétoriqueurs* in verse and prose, which devastated letters in the France of that time. It is certain that any work of these unhappy *rhétoriqueurs* appears to the modern reader threadbare beyond belief, if not completely sterile, and this is the case even with those of the greatest reputation, Chastellain (in Burgundy) or Meschinot (in Brittany); but their very number and success give us valuable insight into the taste of their contemporaries for ingenuities of thought and idea and for refinements of form. All alike are ridiculously strained and grotesquely exaggerated. But they could never have been produced in an epoch indifferent to literature.

Art

Finally, France has one supreme art, in the domain of architecture, that of the *Flamboyant Gothic*, an art indeed rather of virtuosos than of great artists, but ingenious, subtle, which rejoices in itself, and seeks rather to dazzle than to touch the feelings; which is decadent in that it has reached the extreme limits possible to its technique and its ideals, so that no way is to be seen in which it can either say or do any more in the same direction. The plastic arts, on the contrary, have an illimitable future before them, not only in the school of Flanders

[3] Short comic plays with allegorical figures.

and of Burgundy, since neither Fouquet nor Bourdichon nor Michel Colombe come from these schools, and, though they may have already been touched by Italian influences, their inspiration and orientation remain French and mediaeval. The strongest tradition of the great art of the past is prolonged and confirmed in them, even when they employ new methods.

B. *Spirit and sources of this culture*

These considerations confirm the general impression we receive from a study of French culture in the second half of the fifteenth century: that *the Middle Ages continue and, indeed, survive in this culture*, while the political and social developments of the country tend, on the contrary, to turn it from mediaevalism, and direct its course under new principles in new directions. We have already made a passing reference to the introduction of printing into the kingdom in the time of Louis XI, an invention whose application cannot fail to make breaches in a culture which rests mainly upon faith, authority, tradition and reduces the most original individualities to isolation. *The printing-press will change everything.* This is the reason why art, literature and thought, for all their apparent activity, can no longer fully suffice for the new times which are coming, and they must either adapt themselves to the new needs as they become defined, or must be deeply transformed or possibly give way to new forms.

It is virtually in decline

C. *Signs of transformation:* the centres of influence

This transformation had, in fact, begun before the marvel of Italy had dazzled the eyes of Charles VIII. It had been started, as commonly happens, by external influences, not by those massive and irresistible forces which modify, root and branch, all that stand in their way, but rather by slow processes of infiltration which introduce new methods, tendencies and perceptions, which determine original individual orientations, and initiatives more or less fertile. Two regions were, at that time, in a position to influence the life of France in this way: the *Netherlands* and *Germany*—which may be best considered together—and *Italy*.

1. *German and Flemish countries.* Their wealth and intellectual activity

The German and Flemish countries, enriched by commerce, industry and banking, are, at that time, in a state of brisk intellectual ferment. Inventions of capital importance have transformed the technique of thought and art, and even the means by which they are brought to bear on the world. Mention has already been made of printing, invented and, after much experiment, gradually perfected from Coster of Haarlem down to Gutenberg, in Holland and in the valley of the Rhine; engraving upon copper and wood-cutting, painting in oil, of which the latter facilitates the work of the artist and makes it more durable and more portable, while the former enables his conception to be multiplied indefinitely and disseminated everywhere—engraving and printing go together; each is a complement and an aid to the other. Men enamoured of the new knowledge seek it far and wide, reflect, scrutinise and think. The relations of commerce and banking with Italy have naturally established intellectual contacts, and thus the influence of Italian humanism is already visibly working upon the intellectuals of the North.

Nicolas of Cues

A *Nicolas of Cues*[4] (1401-1464), the author of a rude diatribe against scholasticism to which he gave the title *De docta ignorantia* (concerning learned ignorance), a scholar, a mathematician and an astronomer is already a typical German humanist. He remained a Christian, but he was solicitous that his faith should be enlightened by knowledge of all kinds. He was to die in Rome, a cardinal of the Roman Church, having been an active participator in the Italian Renaissance.

The artists

His steadfast Christianity is characteristic of cultural evolution in the German-Flemish group. Painters such as the two *Van Eycks*, *Van der Weyden*, *Memling* still had a fondness for religious subjects, architects for the building of churches and carvers for their decoration, but their activities were no longer confined to the field of religion. There is no scarcity of secular pieces, civil monuments, portraits and works purely decorative or imaginative. In the main, nevertheless, this art evidently *derives its essential inspiration from the same sources as did that of the Middle Ages.*

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[4] Cues is in the diocese of Treves. The name is often italianized as *Cusa.*

Mediaeval character of their inspiration

It has already been related why Italy too was wealthy and how the competition and emulation among her little States and princes had evolved *Patronage*, with its "Maecenas" or patron, and its systematic encouragement of writers and artists by gifts and pensions which, freeing their lives from material cares, gave them opportunities for study as well as for production. From the fourteenth century onwards, much study was thus devoted in the Peninsula to the works of antiquity, philosophical, literary and artistic; thence emerged a movement comprising *Humanism* on the one side, in the domain of thought and letters, beginning with Petrarch who died in 1374, and the *Renaissance* on the other side, that of art, a return to the aesthetic of the ancients and emulation of them in a new application to the analysis of nature. *The inspiration of these twin movements was antique, secular and to some extent pagan;* they definitely turned away from the Middle Ages which they inclined to despise as an epoch of ignorance and barbarism.

2. Italy

Wealth and "Patronage"

Thought, literature and art

Her detachment from the Middle Ages

Till 1494 the dominating influences in France had been those from the northern countries; that of Italy had affected only a few of her artists, and had remained quite superficial. The expedition of Charles VIII undoubtedly was, to the majority of those cultivated Frenchmen who took part in it, a dazzling revelation of a hitherto unknown civilisation. Such humanists as *Angiolo Politian*, such artists as *Botticelli, Perugino, Mantegna, Bellini* and *Leonardo da Vinci*, then at the outset of his career, were stars in the firmament of the time: the Frenchmen admired and bought. They conveyed their purchases to France whither offers of handsome commissions brought the artists themselves. The Italian mode became fashionable in refined and distinguished circles.

The importance of the expedition of Charles VIII for French culture

Italy in 1494

Her influence on the invaders

Thus the masses of indiscriminate taste, whose only preoccupation is to follow fashion, admired all things Italian, and French artists imitated works which were in such demand among French *amateurs*. But the Italians did not merely bring over works and technique, new to France; they imported also a *doctrine* and an *aesthetic* widely different from those previously prevalent in the country, of which the attraction was not long in making itself felt. It is the triumph of this aesthetic and this doctrine which is to mark the real transformation made by the Renaissance in French literature and art.

D. *Stages of the French Renaissance*

This evolution may be said to have had *three periods:* (1) *Under Charles VIII and Louis XII* it inaugurates the struggle between the conflicting influences of past and present, North and South; (2) Under *Francis I* it acquires definition and vigour and inclines towards the triumph of the Italian element; (3) Under *Henry II and his sons* the latter triumphs completely, the doctrine of what is known as *classicism* in literature and art is established. These divisions, of course, are applicable only within wide limits; the periods are not really separated by definite dates.

III

The first period (1494-1515). The influence of patrons

It has already been said that *patronage* was not unknown in France in the second half of the fifteenth century, under Charles VII and even under Louis XI, who was not so impervious to culture as he has been represented; Charles of Orléans, René of Anjou and Philip the Handsome have already been mentioned. Their example was followed by many lesser men. After 1494 the encouragement of writers and artists came to be regarded as practically incumbent upon men of wealth and high place. Works of art from Italy found their way into private collections; ancient manuscripts, with the precious books which reproduced them, enriched the library of every amateur, while Italian scholars and artists gave living exam-

Amateurs and collections

ples by their presence. There was a craze for things Italian, confined at first to a limited circle—that of the great lords, who had seen Italy. Having captured these, it rapidly proceeded to the conquest of all high society, though resistance to its influence was not wanting. It is remarkable that of the two most interesting patrons under Louis XII, Queen Anne of Brittany and Georges d'Amboise, the former remained, on the whole, faithful to the taste of the preceding period, employing Michel Colombe to build the tomb of her father, Francis II, at Nantes and Bourdichon to produce her celebrated *Book of Hours.* Georges d'Amboise,[5] on the other hand, familiar with Italy, assisted to the best of his ability the triumph of her influence in France. But French art was still sufficiently alive to react upon imported artists and indeed often to make them yield to its pressure in their own work.

Resistance to Italian fashion

The most interesting buildings at this time are still far more French than Italian in character, when they are not entirely French. Such are the *Hôtel de Cluny* and the *tower of St. Jacques*, at Paris, the *Palace of Justice* of Rouen and the *tower of Beurre* in the same town, with the *château of Amboise* and the front building of the *château of Blois.* Italian influence occasionally appears in monuments fundamentally French, as, for instance, at Bourges, in the *Hôtel Lallemant.* At the same time artists, fundamentally French, such as those already mentioned, Michel Colombe and Bourdichon, show in more than one detail that they are acquainted with the new taste, and do not disdain to borrow motives and themes from art based on antiquity. It has been justly observed that the landscapes and particularly the buildings represented in the miniatures of the *Book of Hours* of Anne of Brittany are the work

The monuments of the time

The artists: Michel Colombe and Bourdichon

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[5] *Georges d'Amboise* (1460-1510), a churchman, who, after having served Louis of Orléans during the reign of Charles VIII, became his prime minister when he himself became Louis XII and died a cardinal. He made several long visits to Italy.

of a man who was not ignorant of Italian architecture, and that his representation of God the Father and the Christ was also derived from the other side of the Alps. Thus, of the two artistic currents which meet and mingle, the stronger is still that which springs from French tradition.

The first French humanists

Certain great scholars appear, who make a clean cut with the cultural school of the preceding generation, a *Guillaume Budé*, a *Claude Seyssel*, a *Lefèvre d'Étaples* who are in love with antiquity, and study it on their own account, not in imitation of the Italians, but moved by an impulse which comes from the North as much as from the Peninsula. When Italian scholars settle in France they find scholars of the Netherlands in possession.

Character of the Italian influence during this period

Frenchmen thus, during the period under consideration, received, from Italian influence, mainly *impressions*, ideas and suggestions; these, for the most part, they welcomed; their own habitual intellectual and artistic outlook thus became altered; new horizons in many directions were opened to their gaze. These influences, however, were still *sporadic;* they were not systematised in *doctrines*. They are rather brilliant novelties than the principles of a system. While they are far from sympathetic with the spirit of the Middle Ages, the conflict is latent except in the exclusively intellectual domain, where their influence results in real hostility to the tradition of the near past. The future is still uncertain.

IV

The second period (1515-1547). Expansion of the Italian Renaissance

The Italian Renaissance was not complete when Frenchmen first began to feel its attraction. It continued its magnificent course throughout the Italian wars. The names of Julius II (1503-1513) and Leo X (1513-1521) are representative of this period in which the Renaissance is commonly regarded as having attained its highest point and greatest profusion in works of the first rank. In this time *Bramante*, *Michael Angelo*, *Raphael* and *Leonardo da Vinci*, *Titian*, *Julio Romano*, *Andrea del Sarto* are in full production, together with *Machiavelli* and *Ariosto*, two stars in the firmament of letters. Nor is it only by the memory and tradition of a glorious past that Italy continues to influence France, but by the prestige of a present which daily surpasses its own self in splendour of achievement.

Evolution of Germany and the Netherlands in the Italian direction

During the same period, the Netherlands and Germany rapidly evolved in a similar direction as they came more definitely under the Italian influence. Humanism struck vigorous roots in their soil. Basel, a town which is the open door of the Germanic world upon the South, becomes the centre of a teaching inspired by the new methods and discipline. *Erasmus* of Rotterdam (1467-1536) is the equal of the greatest Italian scholars. In art, the local tradition persists side by side with the Italian, though how strong the latter was can be seen in the work of some of the greatest masters, an *Albrecht Dürer* (1471-1527) or a *Hans Holbein* (1498-1543).[6] In this way, the support available for the mediaeval French tradition, by the persistence of its spirit in the northern countries, grows weaker. Examples which come from these countries tend more and more to grow like those which come from Italy. Altogether, the Italian Renaissance, which is aristocratic and secular, has no longer any counterpoise in France except the national traditions, the habits which still attach thought and art to religion and subordinate both to religious inspirations or suggestions and, in addition, those which give a popular character to part of current literature. It must be added that the new king, Francis I, is a lover of letters and the arts—he protects and encourages both. His example draws after him all the

Importance of this evolution for France

***Francis I:* his personal influence**

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[6] A curious instance of this influence is given us by the work of Van der Weyden. This Flemish painter made a journey to Italy (he was at Rome in 1450). Recollections of what he saw there can be clearly traced in all his works which are subsequent to his return.

great men of the kingdom and it is towards the brilliant forms of Italian culture, which appeal strongly to their tastes as dandies and dilettanti, that all these patrons spontaneously incline. Fashion and the snobbery, which it inevitably fosters, lead them in the same direction.

The general development of the period

Until 1530, artists and amateurs incline to things Italian, in pursuance of their own taste, and not in obedience to rules and principles. From 1530 onwards, we can see the gradual development of a doctrine which sanctions and systematises fashion and taste. It does not, indeed, become established without meeting with resistance. This is, at first, the normal unreasoned and passive resistance of old habits to aggressive novelties, particularly among the middle and lower classes; when, for example, the ideas of Luther reached France towards 1520, those men who were naturally conservative and attached to orthodoxy were not satisfied merely to decline to entertain them. They put them down to Humanism, a view not entirely erroneous, and joined forces in an attack on the hated culture. The upper classes, on the other hand, felt its attraction and laboured for its dissemination.

A. *The humanists*

The French humanists were philologists, scholars and professors, rather than stylists. Their little care for form, with which the Italians were so greatly concerned, gives them an early originality of their own. Their attack on the older culture was intensified during the reign of Francis I.

The *College of France* (1530)

Science emancipated of religion

The foundation of the *College of France* in 1530 appears to us, and justly so, of much greater moment than the king, to whom it was due, could have foreseen at the time. Compared with the University, which is an established and exclusive corporation, protected against all external influences by its examinations and diplomas, and closely restricted in any research which it could undertake by its dependence on theology, the *College* is a free association of men, assembled and united by a common and disinterested love of knowledge. Each chooses the field of work that he prefers and cultivates it for its own sake; *there is no thought as to its bearing on theology.* Thus in the College science is now freed from the fetters of religion. Free antiquity stands up and triumphantly faces the authoritative discipline of the Middle Ages. The sciences, properly so-called—medicine, ancient languages, Oriental languages, Greek and Roman philosophy—are studied side by side; little by little, appropriate methods for each particular study are determined and established.

Transformation of teaching

Educational books are published, find their way into the colleges and modify their courses of instruction. The study of classical Latin becomes the basis of all liberal education. The rhetoric of Cicero and Quintillian takes the place of the scholastic dialectic in the training of studious youth. The ideal, well expressed by Rabelais (1493?-1553), is the organisation of a course of study in which literature occupies by far the greatest place and whose end is to form an *aristocracy of the mind.* These intellectuals of the new type have a growing contempt for the *Gothic* past as they call the Middle Ages. "*Times . . . still dark and full of the infelicity of the Goths,*" says Rabelais (*Pantagruel*, II, 10). They feel they have entered *into plenitude of light.*[7]

Quintillian

Resistance: The University against the College

The representatives of the past do not, however, retire without resistance. The University takes the field against the College of France, but is ill-equipped for competition, since it has no means of thwarting those who desire to learn what it cannot, or will not, itself teach. It finds itself in no position to win the day, which is, in fact, soon lost. In other respects, though it still boasts of subtle and tenacious doctors, difficult to silence and perhaps more difficult, still, to convince, it can no longer show personalities worthy to be set beside *Guillaume Budé*, the real founder of the College, or the illustrious Orientalist, *Guillaume Postel.* It thus fails in its attempt to absorb the new institution by bringing it under its own control.

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[7] *In hac tanta saeculi nostri luce* (Rabelais, *Letter* of June 3, 1532). "*Now men have learnt to know themselves, now their eyes are opened to the universal light*" (Etienne Dolet).

The great scholars

The *lecteurs* (lecturers) within the College have companions outside it who are travelling the same road, and many of these have attained to lasting fame by their published works. It will be sufficient to name *Robert Estienne* (1503-1559), a printer as well as a scholar, whose *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* was to become the foundation of all future lexicographical work. His son Henri published at a later date, 1572, its admirable equivalent, *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae.* The minds of these men have assuredly not altogether thrown off the fetters of the past; they often do no more than exchange one authority for another, theology for antique tradition, and this often stops them when they are on the point of drawing valuable inferences from facts ascertained by experiment, but they do, at any rate, aspire to freedom of mind and appreciate its imperative necessity. A Guillaume Postel, who led a most varied life as a kind of illuminate and visionary and believed that his life's work ought to be the conversion of the Moslem, did not, for all that, remain less resolutely an advocate of free research and tolerance. By this trait he is shown to have freed himself both from University tradition and from the mediaeval habit of mind. He stands, indeed, outside his own time and shows it the road to a still distant future.

Their mental complications

B. *The artistic movement*

During this second period, the artistic movement in France grows in amplitude and the Italian influence is much strengthened. This is obvious at first sight; but another phenomenon is no less worthy of attention. It corresponds to the separation which has already been referred to in the intellectual order between science and religion; it is the independence attained by the different, the individual arts. In the Middle Ages, sculpture and painting were the handmaids of architecture. The sculptor and the painter worked under the direction of the architect for the realisation of a whole which he has conceived, but

Emancipation of diverse arts

at this point the sculptor becomes emancipated from the architect and the painter from the sculptor. Each practises his art on his own account and within the limits of its own technique. It should also be noted that forms of art dear to the Middle Ages and still much practised in the preceding period: illumination, carving in ivory and wood, fall into the background. Finally it is to be noted that realism recedes before an aesthetic which becomes more and more idealistic.

Diverse novelties

The new *château*

The transformation of the seigneurial dwelling had long been in progress; the prohibition of private war had made the feudal châteaux useless while the desire for common convenience, for light and elegance, made it seem uninhabitable. Henri Estienne could write in 1556: "*Our ancestors, wishing only to make their walls great and thick, deprived themselves, for this purpose, of the convenience of light for want of the invention to make windows such as are made in these days.*" The time of Francis I saw the erection of splendid châteaux, whose harmonious proportions still fill us with admiration: those of Chambord, Madrid,[8] Villers-Cotterets, Chantilly, Saint-Germain, Fontainebleau, the Louvre—begun by the architect Pierre Lescot in 1546, after the demolition of the old building of Charles V—the Hôtel de Ville of Paris.[9] None of these edifices impresses us as a copy of any Italian palace, even when its architect is Italian: the French climate necessitates great modifications in the planning and arrangement of the buildings. For this reason the architecture of this time, while it embodies Italian principles, technique and decoration, has nevertheless an originality of its own.

The churches

Gothic art, however, still preserves its supremacy, not exclusively but decidedly, in the construction of the majority of churches built at the time. It will be sufficient to name, at Paris, Saint-Gervais, Saint-Eustache, Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, Saint-Merry and, at Bourg, the celebrated church of Brou.

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[8] This has, of course, nothing to do with the capital of Spain. The château of Madrid, now destroyed, was at Neuilly, at the gates of Paris, within the Bois de Boulogne.

[9] This building was burnt in 1871, but the present building reproduces it in the main.

The School of Fontainebleau

The artistic movement is mainly under the influence of what is known as the *School of Fontainebleau,* because its principal example comes from the studio of *Primatice,* at once painter, sculptor and architect, and side by side with him that of *Rosso,* both established at Fontainebleau. This influence, beginning towards 1533, lasts far beyond the reign of Francis I, Primatice not dying till 1570. The Italians, attracted by the king and by different patrons, worked side by side with French artists, and it is sometimes far from easy to distinguish the share of each in any particular work. Often each influences the other. But it is evident that the question is one not only of *impressions* more or less durable and deep, received by the artists and amateurs of France, but also of *principles and rules,* which they discuss and occasionally dispute, and in the end gradually accept as expressing *truth and reason.*

Principles and *rules* established

V

The third period (1547-1589)

The new generation which asserts itself about 1550: its ambitions

Towards 1550 a generation reaches man's age which has both an intrepid confidence in itself and a deep disdain for the past. This generation is to systematise the principles and rules into doctrines or even dogmas, thinking with some simplicity to "*make all things perfect.*" It is worthy of remark that this movement will lead to the elaboration of a well-defined and dominant aesthetic system. It proceeds from a twin imitation, that of antiquity and Italy, but at the same time it tends to intensify the *national sentiment. Joachim du Bellay,* interpenetrated through and through with ancient culture, proclaims the dignity and excellence of the *French tongue* (1549), and *Philibert de l'Orme,* that of *French architecture*

(1567). The great disturbances which began under Francis II and are known as the *Religious Wars*, will delay this evolution towards the systematisation of a theory of literature and art, but will not stop it. Under Henry II, circumstances are favourable to the enrichment of culture. France does not greatly suffer from a slow and languishing war which only occasionally does her any damage. The king and the court are luxurious in their tastes and solicitous to encourage artistic production, little as the son of Francis I has of the Maecenas in his make-up; but all great lords and their wives *pique* themselves on their appreciation of art and letters. Elsewhere the new tendencies triumph throughout Europe. The balance between the two influences turns finally in their favour.

Favourable circumstances

The spirit which blows through this generation is bold and *almost pagan*. Such Christian utterances as it thinks prudence demands from it are ordinarily superficial and suspect. In reality it is violently attacked by a sensualism of antique type or what professes to be such and it makes a poor resistance. One need only turn over the pages of Ronsard to appreciate this fact. Yet it would be an error to think that the time bred none but voluptuaries and profligates. They are far more abundant in literary gossip than they were in life.

The spirit of this generation

During this period, Humanism survives in the shape of scholarship and develops a literature whose tendencies were determined by *Du Bellay*,[10] *Ronsard* and his school, known as the *Pléiade*, and by the first academic associations: the *Pléiade* itself, in 1556, and the *Académie du Palais*, in 1576. They turn on a few leading principles: contempt for *Gothic* barbarism, disdain of the vulgar, *personal* and *original* imitation of antiquity. The whole is often accompanied by a self-satisfaction and a pedantry which induce a smile, but which are, in fact, part of the strength of these lovers of "the perfect." They some-

A. *Humanism and literature*

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[10] Du Bellay was born in 1522, Ronsard in 1524, Lescot, Philibert de l'Orme, Goujon between 1510 and 1520.

times attain it, and Ronsard, indeed, is a great poet, unequal though he be.

The study of the Roman law

Humanism led also to the closer study of Roman law, hence the fame of *Jacques Cujas* (1522-1590) and, as a sequel, to the elaboration of *theories of government.* Is it not a curious fact that at the very epoch in which the French monarchy was under full sail for absolutism, the juridical *dialecticians* like Étienne Pasquier, Jean Bodin and François Hotman agreed in their commendation of a limited and indeed what may be called a constitutional system of monarchy? Curious, indeed—when we hear Erasmus declaring that the power of the prince is only a *function* delegated to him by the people—but it is no more; these reflections in the abstract on principle and logic must await their hour, which is still far distant.

B. ***The arts***

The architecture

The arts have been directed by the same impulses and have followed the same tendencies as letters. Thus architecture searches for the law of its aesthetic in *Vitruvius*,[11] and for its basic models in the works of antiquity, adjusted to modern needs and to the climatic conditions of France. Of the three great characteristic works of this time, the *Tuileries*, the *château of Anet* and that of *Chenonceaux*, the last alone remains. It is sufficient to give us a high opinion of the imagination, taste and technical ability of its builders.

The artists and their works

It is not within our subject to dwell long on the artists and their works, or even to make any attempt to characterise them with any precision. The great names are in all memories and are naturally attached to the fine works.

Among these names are those of *Pierre Lescot*, the first architect of the Louvre, *Philibert de l'Orme*, who built the Tuileries and the château of Anet, *Jean Goujon*, whose

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[11] Vitruvius is a Roman architect of the first century of our era, whose treatise *De architectura* is the only work of the kind which antiquity has bequeathed to us. It was reprinted several times in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Fountain of the Innocents stands near the Halles, *Germain Pilon*, who made the tomb of Henry II at Saint-Denis, *François Clouet*, the great portrait painter of the time, and *Jean Cousin*, the painter of the windows of Vincennes.

The conservative resistance and opposition

The partisans of ancient habits, of the ancient aesthetic, are not yet all disarmed, but they are practically vanquished. The mass of the public keeps a taste, in literature, for the schools of the Middle Ages, and the *Romances of Chivalry* continue to find readers, as is shown by their constant reprinting. Men are to be met with who protest both against the humanist craze for the ancients and against the Italian mode in the arts. There are some independents who refuse to follow the movement; for instance, a *Pierre Ramus*, who had the audacity to criticise the ancients with irreverence, a *Bernard Palissy*, the famous potter, who knows no Latin and has no faith in anything but experiment, an *Ambroise Paré*, one of the fathers of modern surgery, who also is without antique culture and almost failed to obtain his degree as doctor on account of his bad Latin. Antagonism and resistance alike achieve, however, no more than to confirm the obvious victory of Classicism and the total defeat of Mediaevalism.

Conclusion

A veritable revolution has thus been accomplished in less than a century in the mind and the taste of France, and one of the essential elements of French culture still living today has been determined and confirmed. The general character and orientation of intellectual and artistic life have mostly changed; it had been *religious*, it has become *secular*. Distinctions still much contested at that time and often forgotten, but henceforward ineffaceable, have been established between theology, now cast down from its sovereign dignity in culture, and secular mental pursuits which are valued for themselves and are in themselves all-sufficient to their disciples. A decisive step in the creation of the French temperament has been taken; the confusion of the Middle Ages has disappeared, the clarity of the modern era has begun.

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CHAPTER XIX

THE DETERMINATION OF MODERN FRANCE: THE REFORMATION

I

Renaissance and Reformation

Italian Humanism and Catholic orthodoxy

The paganisers

The modernists

IN Italy, humanism often came into conflict with Christianity while affecting towards the latter such external respect as prudence appeared to demand. The names of *Laurent Valla*, *Antonio Beccadelli*, called *Panormita*, *Poggio*, *Pietro Pomponazzi*, form a list of formidable antagonists to the theological culture and the ecclesiastical spirit of their time (fifteenth century), a set of sceptics, at once scholars and philosophers and quite detached from the religious mentality of the Middle Ages. Among Italian humanists there were undoubtedly many who continued to believe themselves Christians with complete sincerity, such as *Marsilius Ficinus* (+ 1499) and *Pico della Mirandola* (+1494); but, unrealised by themselves, their new culture reacted upon their doctrinal convictions and tended to modify these, at any rate in form and spirit, if not fundamentally, in fact, *to modernise them.* A man whose knowledge becomes so transfigured as was that of the Italians who, in their rediscovery of the ancient world, were thrown by its impact into passionate pursuit of new thought, cannot entirely dissociate his faith from his intellectual life. The impossibility of so doing is the starting-point of all the *modernistic* movements which have disturbed the Catholic Church at different epochs in its existence.

Effect of Humanism elsewhere

Humanism, therefore, wherever it has taken root, has produced more or less far-reaching religious perturbations. It has led reflecting men to submit their traditional beliefs and their ecclesiastical customs to the test of their new knowledge and ideas. This was what happened, particularly in Germany. Such scrutiny did not everywhere, as is well known, prove advantageous to the Church—whose unity did not withstand the test unimpaired—nor to the faith which in the imagination of the Middle Ages had attained finality. France did not escape a crisis of this nature. It is known as the *Reformation* and it stirred the country to its depths.

II

The idea of reform of the Church in the Middle Ages

All the Middle Ages had demanded a reform of the Church. The reason is not difficult to understand: in theory the Church represents an extremely high ideal; this, however, in practice she has never been in a position to realise, for she can work only through men, by nature imperfect and weak, shut in by their own times and surroundings, of whose shortcomings and indeed vices they themselves are more or less the reflections. Among the clergy of all times, outstanding personalities undoubtedly arise, whose virtues and works command the admiration of their contemporaries, but it is to be noted that these heroes of Christ have always spent the better part of their days, when they have consented to take part in active life, instead of holding aloof, in endeavours to remedy imperfections and reform abuses. Every epoch has always thus encumbered the Church in her pursuit of perfection and at the same time has not failed to point out that she fell short of her aims and, on occasion, to appear duly scandalised thereby.

A. *Diverse attempts*

For these reasons, again and again, during the Middle Ages the Church attempted her own reformation. The endeavour would be made sometimes by a monk, aided by civil authority, such as *Benoît d'Aniane* under Louis the Pious in the ninth century, sometimes by a monastic order governed by a rigorous code, such as the *Order of Cluny* in the tenth century, sometimes by an energetic pope as by *Gregory VII* in the eleventh century, or *Innocent III* at the end of the twelfth century and beginning of the thirteenth. But none could ever be carried forward so thoroughly or so continuously as to achieve a transformation really complete, radical and, above all, durable. Undoubtedly on these successive occasions remedies were found for the most obvious evils, but the causes from which these arose still continued, and it was not long before they recovered strength and emerged again into daylight. It availed little to reduce opulent monks to the state of poverty decreed by their constitutional rule, while all men still held donations to monasteries to be works of piety and salvation. The wealth that had been taken away was soon restored and with it the excesses that it everywhere engenders.

Their unsuccess

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries this need for reform, so often and unsuccessfully attempted, was felt more acutely than ever before; the disorder in France, due to the Hundred Years' War, had by then more than ever relaxed the discipline of the clergy, who, for their own part, only too often seem to have lost all interest in their work and to have neglected their flocks. Furthermore, grave charges were made, not without reason, by the most devoted of Christians against the highest dignitaries of the Church, who were alleged to be too exclusively concerned for their own temporal interests and well-being. These charges, while they did not ordinarily touch the pontiff in person, did not spare his entourage. His court passed for a place where the sovereign power of gold was more scandalously asserted than in any other in the world. *Philopecunia* (love of money) reigned over it unashamed. From the thirteenth century onwards, the most enlightened of the faithful are to be seen admitting and lamenting the deplorable example given by the pope, who, having become the sovereign of the Church, habitually does not behave otherwise than a secular prince, and this at heavy cost to Christianity, so large a

Increase of ecclesiastical disorder in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries

Charges made against the Roman Curia

place does his concern to fill his coffers occupy in his daily thoughts.

B. *The captivity of Avignon*

When Philip the Handsome had compelled Clement V to transfer the Holy See to Avignon in 1308, one consequence of this disguised captivity [1] was to deprive the pontiff of the greater part of his Roman revenues. He was thus driven, in order to obtain the money which he needed and which his general policy demanded, to develop still further the unpopular fiscal methods which he had been previously unable to eradicate from the curia. John XXII, pope from 1316 to 1334, did not hesitate to censure the Franciscans who dared to recollect the poverty of Christ and to blame the opulence of Christ's vicar. The result was that even the pope in person became the object of attack by the malcontents, and opinion became emphatic that it was necessary, in the interest of Christianity, to reform the Church both *in its chief* (that is to say, its head) and *in its members.* Two professors of the University of Paris, Marsiglio of Padua and Jean de Jandun, instigated by the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, an enemy of John XXII, composed, under his protection, a violently worded indictment of the pope (1326). This *Defensor Pacis* (Defender of Peace), as they entitled it, was above all a weapon for war, but side by side with the personal attacks which it contained, it expressed opinions current in the Universities, among the most learned and pious doctors, and among the most saintly of Christians. St. Catherine of Sienna, Dante (+1321) and the most enlightened princes of the time joined with William of Occam [2] or Nicolas Clemengis in openly declaring that all now went ill in the house of the Lord and that to repair the evil many great changes were needed.

Fiscal consequences

Discontent with the papacy and resultant attacks on it

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[1] The sojourn of the papacy at Avignon lasted till 1370; it has been called the *Captivity of Babylon* in comparison with the sojourn imposed on the Jews in Assyria in the seventh century B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar.

[2] William of Occam, an English Franciscan (+ 1347) then a refugee in Germany, published a pamphlet in which he developed an idea which a modern historian would accept, but which at that time appeared singularly bold: that the Church should transform itself according to the needs of successive ages.

C. *The Great Schism*

Yet all was soon to go worse than ever. The pope, Gregory XI, taking advantage of the fact that Charles V was by no means a Philip the Handsome, returned to Rome, where he died and where his successor was elected (1378). This was Urban VI, a rough-and-ready spirit, who dismayed his cardinals by threatening to start the called-for reform forthwith and to start it by reforming the *chief* and *head* of the Church; to wit, themselves. They put their heads together, betook themselves one by one out of Rome, met together elsewhere, alleged that they had chosen Urban only under pressure from popular violence, declared him not legally pope, deposed him, and put one of themselves in his place under the name of Clement VII. But as Urban, supported by the Romans, refused to accept his deposition and held his own in the city, his rival had no other resource than to reinstate the palace of Avignon. *Thus there came to be two popes*, to the great scandal, dismay and sorrow of all Christendom. Each reciprocally excommunicated the other with his adherents and since it was not absolutely clear that one was more in the right than the other, many of the faithful were thrown into anguished uncertainty whether they were living thenceforward under the malediction of the *true pope* and in danger of damnation.

Scandal and dismay

In reality, the division in the Christian world between two *allegiances* was based on political reasons. No sooner had the King of France placed himself on the side of Avignon than the King of England took that of Rome and both were followed by their allies. All, nevertheless, and with them many great figures in Christendom and the Universities, particularly in that of Paris, exerted themselves to put an end to the *Great Schism*. It was, however, in spite of the volume of opinion ranged against it, to endure till 1417. Every effort failed: negotiations to effect a compromise between the two rivals; pressure put upon both to induce them to abdicate; attempts to depose them. This last method, indeed, initiated by an assem-

The reason for the prolongation of the crisis bly of cardinals of both allegiances, held at Pisa, in 1409, had a quite unexpected result. The council of Pisa pronounced the deposition of the two pontiffs and chose a single successor in their place, but as they refused to give way and as the pope elect held his own election to be valid, the schism became still more complicated *and there were three popes instead of two.*

The religious and moral consequences

This crisis greatly weakened the moral authority of the papacy, and all bonds of clerical discipline, now no longer maintained by any superior power, became deplorably relaxed. The bad morals of the clergy, their habits of simony and concubinage, were openly flouted before the world; their disregard of duty and their greed gave offence to all Christians. Mendicants and seculars joined in disputes and recrimination, laughing-stocks for all spectators, while educated Christians saw the cause of all these evils in the fact that the Church had departed from the Scriptures and from apostolic tradition. Of her laymen, some lost all hope, others abandoned themselves to the chimerical consolations of mysticism and awaited the advent of the *Angelical Pope* formerly foretold by Joachim of Flora, or dreamed of a popeless Church; others thought to avert the scourge of God, evidently at work in all this anarchy, by indulging in dangerous exercises of flagellation in common. The doctors, however, drafted a programme for the council which, when it should have ended the schism, would impose upon the one chosen pope the reforms unanimously recognised as necessary.

D. *Why reform was not accomplished*

1. Influence of the revolutionaries

Unfortunately for the realisation of these hopes, the exasperated discontent of the people encouraged some bold and convinced spirits to forestall the future council and to consider in detail the constitution of the Church and later its doctrine. They were thus led to formulate certain highly revolutionary opinions and to support these by demonstrations extremely disquieting, not only to the papacy and to the Church, as it had come down from the Middle Ages, but also to all Christians who held too closely to habit and tradition to accept voluntarily so sweeping a change. Thus *John Wyclif* (+1384) in England and *John Huss* (+1415) in Bohemia, while they broke the road for the great reformers of the sixteenth century, undoubtedly irremediably ruined it for those of the fifteenth. When the latter attempted, at the *council of Constance* (1414-1418), after the reëstablishment of pontifical unity by the election of *Martin V* (1417), to carry their programme into effect they were confronted by the ill-will of the new pope, who was fortified by the universal joy at the ending of the schism and the fear of promoting heresy; and they had also to deal with the apprehensions of men, who, aghast at the danger of heresy, adduced the examples of John Huss and his friend *Jerome of Prague*—two victims of the council of Constance—in support of prudence and temporisation. Martin V made skilful use of these diverse sentiments to further a rapid restoration of complete pontifical power. Some years later the *council of Basel* (1431-1445) made an attempt to regain the advantage, but the great doctors of Constance, Jean Gerson, Nicolas Clemengis, Pierre d'Ailly, had died, others, such as Nicolas of Cues, had been won over by Rome, and the most energetic resolutions of the assembly were unable to prevail over the patient obstruction of the pope. This defeat destroys the last hope of compelling the curia to reform and confirms the triumph of the Roman pontificate.

2. Policy of the pope and failure of the council

The pope abandons reform

The pope, having got the better of the council, washed his hands of reform: he reëstablished order, as far as he could, among the clergy, restored the authority of the hierarchy, and buried himself in the intricacies of Italian politics, as did Alexander VI (1492-1503) who was, incidentally, one of the most scandalous pontiffs who ever occupied the chair of St. Peter.[3]

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[3] It should be understood that Paul II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, his three predecessors, were not much better than he as representatives of the pontifical ideal; they are, more or less, like other Italian princes of this time of corruption, cruelty and intrigue.

To similar political interests, Julius II (1503-1513) and Leo X (1513-1521) added very engrossing and costly artistic pursuits. Need for money continually made the Holy See less scrupulous as to methods employed in obtaining it. Of these methods, the most scandalous was *the sale of indulgences* in favour of souls held in purgatory, a trade which resulted only too often in an abominable exploitation of simple piety and of family affection: how was it possible to refuse to buy a little repose for the dead, who in life had been loved?

Results of this unwisdom

Luther and Zwingli

This imprudence of the pope, who mistakenly despised his vanquished opponents, provoked a new series of revolts against him. In Germany the monk *Martin Luther* (1520) and in Switzerland the parish priest *Zwingli* (1522) withdrew from the Roman Church in the name of the Gospel, which they declared she disregarded. The Catholics could not deal with them effectively since many princes took the side of the reformers, attracted by the prospect of profitable *secularisations;* to wit, by the hope of laying hands on the Church property which lay at their doors. The humanists, who had prepared the way for the reformed doctrine, gave it organisers from their ranks and intellectual support.

III

The beginnings of the Reformation in France

A. Opinion in the second half of the fifteenth century

France herself possessed and maintained old traditions asserting her independence of the pope. These were known as *the liberties of the Gallican Church.* The king, as most benefited by them, held to them most strongly. Thus, too, he welcomed the measures passed by the council of Basel, with the object of restricting pontifical omnipotence, and he himself promulgated the *Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges,* already referred to above. The kingdom, too, suffered serious moral deterioration from the Great Schism, and at the beginning of the fifteenth century the idea of reform had found its most noteworthy defenders in Paris. The failure of the council of Basel and the abandonment of reform had caused, therefore, profound disappointment and dissatisfaction in the country.

The States-General, meeting at Tours in 1484, put forward ecclesiastical reform as the desire of all France. They denounced the insufficiency and negligence of the clergy, who "*should be the mould, example and mirror for others.*" To these grievances the humanists added another, that of the ignorance of the majority of the lesser clergy, and in their turn, pressed resolutely for reform.

The French humanists and the New Testament

It was not long before their attention was turned to the Bible: at first to the Old Testament, later to the New. Their studies were, at first, governed by philological preoccupations, having for their object the revision and better comprehension of the text, but they soon became directly interested in the contents, and were seized with a passionate desire to make them better known. Their zeal multiplied editions of the Book, which rapidly found its way into the hands of all men of any culture,[4] and taught them to place in the forefront of their spiritual and religious life impressions and feelings which the doctrine of the Church placed in a very different position.

Practical position of the Church in relation to the Scriptures

The latter seemed far more concerned with her traditions, with the conclusions of her theologians, and the accretions gradually added to the faith, above all with her privileges and her supremacy, than with the teaching of the Scriptures. Seen from without, she seemed practically, if not theoretically, to have given the pope precedence over Christ himself, and paid to God the Father and to Christ less than their legitimate due, in order to render more honour to the Virgin and the saints. Men of that time could not sum up the position as accurately as we are able to do, who, with our different outlook, can see clearly how the Christianity of the Middle Ages could not completely resist either the inevitable reaction of the old habitual paganism still dormant among the people, or the pressure of the philosophical ideas of antiquity introduced on different occasions into the schools, under cover of Pseudo-Denys the Areopagite, of Aristotle, and even of Averroes. The Church believed herself to be based strictly on the Scriptures, when she had in actual fact, from the second century of her existence onwards, developed in great part outside their plan, and had moreover pursued this evolution in a spirit quite alien to theirs. This difference was particularly apparent in the domain of *ecclesiastical organisation*, in the *liturgy* and in *discipline.*

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[4] It is estimated that there were more than *four hundred* of these editions between the time of the discovery of printing and the beginning of the German Reformation.

The bearings of humanist criticisms

These very points were those which attracted the attention of the French humanists. While they felt that the God and the Christ, disclosed to them in the Gospels, should be restored to their true ascendancy in the practical life of the Christian, they rarely ventured to dispute the doctrinal propositions of recognised orthodoxy. On the other hand they revived the ideas of general reform of the Church in her head and in her members, which had been the ruling dream of the great Doctors of the University of Paris a century before. In truth, their principle, excellently formulated by Erasmus: "*Christum ex fontibus praedicare*" (to preach Christ from the sources) went beyond d'Ailly and Gerson and recalled rather Huss and Wyclif. Its application was to lead the boldest and most logical of the humanists to take up, in relation to the Roman Church, and in despite of themselves, for they were far from desiring schism, a position more or less analogous to those of the two men last mentioned.

Lefèvre d'Étaples

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, before the appearance of Luther, the reformist movement took shape in a group of intellectuals gathered about the aged *Lefèvre d'Étaples*, a French scholar of European reputation. Lefèvre had first published various scriptural books, notably in 1512, the *Epistles of St. Paul* with commentaries; he had next applied himself to the presentation of a Christianity founded exclusively on the Bible and upheld by faith—"*Let us not speak,*" he said, "*of the merit of works which is little or nothing*"—a Christianity purged of the superstitions which, in his view, had overmastered it, disencumbered of clerical celibacy, and, if it may be so said, of undue and magical elements in the system of the sacraments. In 1522, he published, in the preface of his *Commentary on the Gospels*—in Latin—a declaration which has been justly regarded as the *manifesto of the Reformation in France.* From 1523 to 1528 he issued successive translations into the vulgar tongue of the *New Testament,* the *Psalms* and the *Old Testament.*

Margaret of Angoulême and Guillaume Briçonnet

He had found a protector in the sister of Francis I, *Margaret of Angoulême,* who had engaged the good-will of the young king on his side. The Bishop of Meaux, *Guillaume Briçonnet,* had offered him his diocese as a training ground for preachers educated according to his programme of reform. He had lodged him in his episcopal palace in order to give him a refuge in the tribulations which were now coming upon him. The good people of Meaux, delighted with the zeal, charity and good sense of the new preachers, were willing proselytes for *Evangelism.* The little group of Lefèvre's friends, apter by nature for study and speculation than for action, were gaining confidence when the long-gathering storm burst upon them in full force.

Opposition of the Sorbonne and the Parliament

The *Sorbonne*—the name given to the Faculty of Theology in the University of Paris—had from the first taken umbrage at the opinions and attempts of Lefèvre; its ill-will, augmenting with every work published by the aged master, had in 1523 won the support of Parliament. In 1523-1524 two actions initiated against him in the High Court of Justice were stopped only by a formal order of the king. The reformers, in fact, had against them not only the great majority of the established Church, the theologians of the Universities, the Parliaments, but also the mass of the people whose prejudices and secular

Opinion and the reformers

habits could be changed only by much patience and after long-continued labour. The only ally on whom they could count was the king, who, however well disposed towards them, was too irresponsible to be really relied on. Finally they themselves, honest and sincere in their convictions as they were, had not been dowered by nature with the spirit of the martyr, and they were quick, also, to take alarm at the audacities of some of their disciples.

The conversions to Lutheranism

In 1520 the writings of Luther had reached Paris and their condemnation by the Sorbonne (April 15, 1521) had increased the attention which they attracted. They had effected conversions among men for whom clear conclusions had an appeal. But the real protagonist of the Reformation in France was to be a Frenchman, a member of the small humanist group who desired reform, but was distinguished from his colleagues by his exceptional resolution of character.

B. *John Calvin*

I refer to *John Calvin,*[5] born at Noyon on the 10th of July, 1509. He came from a family almost clerical—his father, whose name was Gérard, having held an office under the Bishop of Noyon—which had often shown disobedience to clerical authority. Gérard Chauvin had died, excommunicated, after innumerable disputes, quarrels and dissensions, in which, incidentally, he himself had not always shown to the best advantage. His uncle had died refusing the sacraments. He himself, at first intended for the Church, afterwards for the law, had studied at Paris at the college of La Marche and at the college of Montaigu—whose director was Beda, the most ruthless among the enemies of the Reformation—afterwards at the juridical schools of Orléans and Bourges. He had consistently shown himself diligent, exact, accurate and at the same time quite devoid of imagination, poetry or humanistic enthusiasm. He

His education

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[5] His real name was *Jean Chauvin,* a name which, put into Latin according to the usage of the time, took the form of *Calvinus. Calvin* is the French form of *Calvinus.* In the same way Lefèvre d'Étaples, in Latin *Faber Stapulensis,* is often called *Fabri* in his time.

had made the acquaintance of Lefèvre and his pupil, Gérard Roussel, and had entered into their ideas, which he was soon to systematise and to carry much further than their authors had ever done.

His conversion to the Reformation

We can see clearly the general trend of his evolution towards what is known as *Calvinism*, but we cannot easily determine its chronological stages. Whatever these may have been, on the opening of the University in November, 1533, the rector, Cop, delivered a discourse composed by Calvin which, under a studied moderation of form, highly extolled the spirit of the Reformers and affirmed their rights in the teeth of their worst enemies, the Sorbonnians. Great was the scandal and irritation and rapid the inflammation of sacerdotal passion on both sides. The case having been brought before Parliament, legal proceedings were instituted and Cop and Calvin were obliged to fly the country.

L'Institution Chrétienne (1535)

Having retired to Basel, the reformer, at that time regarded as a man of no more than secondary importance, drew up the *Christian Institutes*,[6] in explanation of his ideas, dedicated to Francis I. This work established his unrivalled pre-eminence (1535). He had decided to settle at Strasbourg; chance took him through Geneva, which Guillaume Farel, an old member of the circle of Lefèvre d'Étaples, had induced to adopt the Reformation (1535). Farel needed an organiser, saw in Calvin the man he needed and kept him in Geneva (1536). Calvin's exacting temper and the logical severity with which he met all opposition made him many enemies and in 1538, he, with Farel, was banished from Geneva. But three years later he was recalled and returned to find his supremacy now unchallenged (September 13, 1541). Under his sovereign hand Geneva became an *evangelical republic* whose administration, while irksome, inquisitorial and austere in the extreme, was at the same time

The Church of Geneva

Its widening influence

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[6] This book was in Latin. Calvin himself translated it into French some years later (1541). A second Latin edition (1549) contained several additions.

well suited to foster an exceptional intensity of religious life. Cold and dark as it appears to us, to its contemporaries it seemed a fountain of warmth and light. Under the influence of Calvin and Farel, pastors and preachers, firmly grounded in their creed, were trained and educated, many of whom took upon themselves the task of conquering France for the new faith. They spread and made proselytes throughout the country.

Calvinism, its spirit

Calvinism, precise and radical to a degree far exceeding the aspirations and inclinations of Lefèvre and his disciples,[7] declared its leading principle as follows: "*For the regulation of our faith and religion it is our will to read the Scriptures alone, unmingled with aught added by the contrivance of man apart from the word of God.*"[8] Its ceremonial worship was reduced to an austere simplicity: preaching accompanied by the chant of the faithful, and the celebration of the Supper, which, divested of the dogma of the real Presence and that of Transubstantiation, became no more than "*a spiritual repast where Jesus Christ feeds our souls though he be in heaven and we on earth.*" No room was here for Virgin or saints, images or holy water, sanctified oil or unleavened bread, for elaborate altars or liturgical costumes, for *works* of salvation or for sacraments of magical and irresistible potency; nothing remains but a rigid faith, dominating not only the belief but the daily life of the Christian, while over all broods the dark and almost desperate dogma of *predestination*, the accepted abasement of man under the eternal decisions of God. This was indeed no indulgent or facile religion, yet its very severity and simplicity and its appearance of historical solidity had power to attract and to hold ardent and righteous souls who had come to despair of any reform from the side of Rome.

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[7] Anyone wishing to examine the principles of Calvin himself cannot do better than read his *Confession of Faith* of 1537 which the Genevese were obliged to swear to "*guard and hold,*" and the *Confession of the Scholars* imposed upon the Academy of Geneva in 1559.

[8] "*Pour la reigle de nostre foy et religion, nous voulons lire la seule Escripture, sans y mesler aucune chose qui ait esté controuvée du sens des hommes, sans la parole de Dieu.*"

IV

The king and the Reformation

Francis I and the new ideas

The future of the Reformation in France was in fact to be based far more on Calvinism, now well rooted in Geneva, than on the ideas of the little group of Lefèvre, against whom a storm was gathering in France. It lay even more with the good-will of the king and his personal attitude towards the Reformers. At first, Francis I, in response to pressure from his sister Margaret, had curbed the zeal of the Sorbonne and of Parliament, but, putting aside his natural indecision and inconstancy, he could not readily forego the benefits of the Concordat which he had concluded with Leo X in 1516. Nor indeed could he ignore the fact that the whole religious establishment of his kingdom was Catholic, that all its constituent bodies, to an enormous majority, held firmly to tradition, that the profound charm of Catholic worship and the hypnosis of ancestral habitude still had unimpaired power over nearly all Frenchmen. Altogether he might well doubt whether it would be easy to impose the Reformation upon his subjects, or that it was expedient for him to succeed in doing so.

Reaction after the defeat of Pavia (1525)

After the disaster of Pavia (February 24, 1525), the queen regent, *Louise of Savoy*, in view of the perilous condition of the realm, judged it expedient to make certain of the support of these same constituent bodies, so bitterly hostile to the Reformers. This meant that they must be permitted to wreak their passions in action, which they proceeded to do unreservedly and without delay. They held "*the stupendous sins*" of the innovators responsible for God's wrath, which had now fallen so heavily upon France. By a papal brief, dated the 20th of May, 1525, Parliament was charged to proceed forthwith against all heretics, a task which it undertook with en-

Attitude of Briçonnet

thusiasm. Briçonnet, who, already visibly swept off his feet by his own protégés, had begun to disown them, now faced with the instant application of the severities which Parliament was devising, completely disengaged himself in two episcopal decrees, handed over all preaching in his diocese to the monks, and did his best to make his transgressions forgotten. At the same time, Lefèvre and Roussel retired to Strasbourg.

The first burnings: *Louis de Berquin*

The pyres for the burning of heretics were first lighted in Paris in the autumn of 1525. Year after year they were now to burn on, for the punishment of those who, though poor and obscure, were yet tenacious in their faith. In 1529, however, the animosity of the Sorbonne and Parliament was wreaked on a man of the first rank, *Louis de Berquin*, a friend of Erasmus, whom the king had already twice wrested from their clutch. He was seized, judged and executed in a breath, advantage being taken of the absence of Francis I at Blois (April 17).

The inconsistencies of Francis I

The monarch, absolute though his authority was, did not venture to withstand this passion for persecution supported on the authority of the Virgin, the saints and God himself; though the foundation of the College of France (1530) was in sort a requital to the theologians for their foolishness.[9] From this time onwards his conduct was merely a tissue of inconsistencies: he married his son to *Catherine de' Medici*, niece of Pope Clement VII, while he exiled Beda for daring to attack Margaret of Navarre[10] (1533), while again, a month later, when Cop, too confident in the victory of his party, delivered the famous discourse composed by Calvin, the king immediately gave a free hand to their enemies. Prosecutions and executions were resumed in full force, in spite of all Margaret's efforts to stop them. At moments, again, her brother, anxious to conciliate the German Protestants, seemed ready to change front again, but a too exuberant demonstration by some advocates of the new ideas, hard pressed by the persecutors, somewhat over-zealous—the posting up, for instance, in Paris, in various towns and even at his own home in the château of Amboise, of *Placards*, violently worded, against "*the horrible abuses of the Papal Mass*" (October 18, 1534)—wounded, irritated and disquieted the prince; he thought his own authority menaced, and for a whole year he yielded to the mad passion for persecution with which the Sorbonne and Parliament were possessed.

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[9] *L'ânerie des théologastres.*

[10] Margaret of Angoulême, sister of Francis, widow of the Duke of Alençon, had married in 1526 Henry of Albret, King of Navarre.

The *Placards*

At one time, between 1535 and 1538, it seemed likely that the fundamental moderation of Francis would prevail over the incitements of intolerance to violence, but by that time passions on both sides had become too exacerbated to be easily assuaged. In 1538, moreover, a further vacillation of the king threw him into the arms of Pope Paul III, then dominated by Cardinal Caraffa, a Dominican and an implacable foe to the Reformation. At the same time, those about him, his favourites and intimates, Montmorency, the Guises, Diane de Poitiers were in close alliance with the party of repression. And so on the 1st of June, 1540, appeared the *Edict of Fontainebleau*, which systematically organised the destruction of *heresy*. The intense persecution of the *Valdenses* [11] of Provence inaugurated a new régime, and ended in horrible massacres in which more than 3000 poor, peaceable folk perished, who were not reformers at all. A long procession of Lutherans—Calvinists were still rare—also mounted the scaffold during the last month of the reign, and on the 3d of April, 1546, the illustrious

The king turns to the repression of heresy

The Edict of Fontainebleau (1540)

The Valdenses

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[11] These Valdenses arose from the initiative of a rich merchant of Lyons of the twelfth century, named *Pierre Valdo,* who had dreamt of establishing the *evangelical life* on earth. His heirs, attached to an ideal of poverty and moral austerity, had assumed an attitude of hostility to the clergy and to certain orthodox practices, or even beliefs. They had come to profess that the Scriptures were the only law for the Christian. Their principles were akin to those of the Reformers.

Dolet

humanist, *Étienne Dolet*, the printer of the execrated works of Lefèvre d'Étaples, was burnt in the Place Maubert in Paris; on the 7th of October, fourteen *evangelicals* were similarly handled at Meaux. Thus French royalty had definitely adopted a policy of violence and war against the Reformation, but at the same time the energy of Calvin gave to the new ideas a vitality and cohesion which they had never possessed in the circle of Lefèvre d'Étaples, nor even in the small Lutheran groups constituted in France during the preceding twenty-five years.

The persecution under Henry II

With the accession of Henry II, persecution became still more bitter. Those who had encouraged it under the late king, Montmorency, the Guises, Diane de Poitiers, found their hands freer than ever under the new-comer, a man without heart or will of his own. A special Chamber, equipped with a summary procedure, was organised in Parliament to deal with the heretics. Contemporaries gave it the significant name of the *chambre ardente* (the burning chamber).

The "burning Chamber"

The Edict of Chateaubriant (1551)

The first edict (November 17, 1549) extended the powers of ecclesiastics in pursuit of Reformers; another, known as that of *Chateaubriant* (June 27, 1551), has been justly designated as the *code of the persecution.* It promised a third of the goods of the guilty to the informer. So violent was the fury of the ringleaders in this sinister game that men of good sense, in no way inclined to the ideas of Geneva, began to be disquieted, and even in Parliament tolerance or at least moderation found a few defenders, the more so because the majority of members of the High Court of Justice dreaded the establishment in France of an Inquisition of the Spanish type, demanded by Caraffa and the Guises, while at the same time several inclined secretly towards the Reformation. One of these last, Anne du Bourg, had the audacity to make, in the king's presence, a direct and open appeal to the universal mind and conscience against the multifarious condemnations and executions of men

Anne du Bourg

who, from amid the flames, called on the name of Jesus Christ. Henry II ordered his instant arrest, and little by little treated similarly all parliamentary moderates who were not so wise as to take flight. At the moment when death surprised him (July), he was contemplating an understanding with Philip II of Spain for the better eradication of heresy from France and its pursuit even to Geneva, where the French Reformers were finding refuge and consolation. The unanticipated disappearance of Henry II from the scene did not save du Bourg, who was burnt on the 23d of December, 1559.

Success of Calvinism in France

This multiplication of burnings did not, however, stop the spread of Calvinism in France, particularly in the South, Southwest and the Centre. From 1555 to 1559, communities were organised on the model of the Church of Geneva. Their existence was precarious and the caution that they exercised did not always avail to save them from disaster. They had to remain isolated one from another and thus lost the mutual encouragement which comes from union. So, in 1559, helped by a superficial but vigorous outburst of public sympathy, provoked by the very brutality of the repression, the Church of Paris, a "Domestic church" as in the time of the Apostles, had the courage to convoke a Synod. Delegates from fifty churches met with quiet discretion in a private house in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and drew up the *Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches of France* (May, 1559). Many seigneurs, some of the highest station, had already given adherence to its propositions—the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, the nephews of the Constable of Montmorency: d'Andelot and Coligny.

The Confession of Faith, 1559

It was no longer possible to destroy the Reformers by mere judicial authority; they were henceforward numerous enough and strong enough to defend themselves. For this reason, soon after the death of Henry II, civil war took the place of persecution.

V

The Religious Wars

A. Their general character

For nearly forty years France was to experience innumerable ills from what are known as the *Religious Wars.* These fierce and calamitous encounters were primarily concerned with matters of conscience and faith, but passions altogether secular, and greed merely human, individual ambitions or desires for political domination, continuously assisted to complicate and to prolong them. Francis I and his successor had by now made a habit of leaving the effective exercise of regal power in the hands of a favourite: the three sons of Henry II, who successively occupied the throne after him, were not of a quality to return to a more direct form of government. *Francis II* (1559-1560), a boy fifteen years old, delicate and already doomed, occupied the throne only to vacate it; *Charles IX* (1560-1574) was ten years old at his accession and had never any will or decision of his own; *Henry III* (1574-1589), who was twenty-three when he became king, was capable at times of swift action, but had no energy to follow up and persevere in a decision; the more so since his bad moral repute impaired his personal authority and the respect which should have been paid him. Never were any reigns more favourable for personal intrigues of the great, for struggles for influence over the prince and for authority under his name. Under a weak king these rivalries would have been enough, in themselves, to produce civil war; accentuated as they were by theological dissension, the resultant quarrels attained a bitterness and ruthlessness peculiar to religious conflict.

The kings from 1559 to 1589. The question of the favourite

The great influential families

The nearest relatives of the king, the Bourbons,[12] represented by Anthony, *King of Navarre,* and his brother Henry,

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[12] This family descended from the sixth son of St. Louis, Robert of Clermont, who had acquired Bourbonnais by marriage; the elder branch had become extinct. The branch of *Vendôme* was that which ended by acquiring the crown of Navarre in 1547.

Prince of Condé, had now become Protestants. The most powerful seigneurial family was, at that time, that of the *Guises*,[13] whose chief was named Francis; it professed a supremely intolerant Catholicism. The third family, with pretensions to hegemony, was that descended from the *Constable of Montmorency*, the favourite of Francis I; religiously, they were divided into two parties, the Duke of Montmorency having remained Catholic, while his nephews, for whom his favour had obtained high posts, especially d'Andelot and Coligny, were on the side of Calvin. The Guises had expected to obtain the upper hand by marrying their niece, *Mary Stuart*, to Francis II, but the queen-mother, *Catherine de' Medicis*, who wished to concentrate power in her own hands, was in no way disposed to allow them to do as they wished. She proceeded to adopt the policy of balancing one party against the other, in the Italian manner, thus earning an evil reputation for duplicity in spite of the skill she displayed.

The queen-mother

The spirit of the nobility

The nobility proceeded to take advantage of these many dissensions and of the inevitable resultant relaxation of royal authority, with the object of escaping from the discipline which galled them and of recovering something of their former independence, or at least of their right to agitate as they pleased. Before long, Protestant and Catholic alike, obliged to recognise that each alone was incapable of crushing its adversaries, proceeded to appeal to the foreigner; the former to the English, the latter to the Spaniard.

The Religious Wars from a military point of view

From 1562 to 1594 *eight* religious wars are usually distinguished, separated by ephemeral reconciliations of unstable compromises. Waged by petty armies or simply partisan bands, these so-called wars were most frequently mere acts of brigandage and present no military interest. On the other hand, they were terribly ruinous to the country; every chief of a band sought continually to sow terror before him and treated his vanquished adversaries with implacable ferocity. In detail, the hostilities abounded in dramatic episodes of every kind, only too often creditable neither to religion nor to humanity, however they might demonstrate the courage and the depth of conviction of those who were their heroes. The great figure of *Michel de l'Hôpital,* chancellor at the beginning of the reign of Charles IX, with his dreams of toleration and sincere reconciliation in the common love of Christ, ill compensates for the gloomy gallery of sinister fanatics whose names and portraits the history of the time has preserved.

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[13] A branch of the family of Lorraine. Francis of Guise had retaken Calais in 1558 by a plan devised by Coligny.

The reign of assassination

Assassination had practically become a legitimate weapon, employed by every party in turn as might seem expedient. Several chiefs, such as Francis of Guise, his son, Henry of Guise, his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, King Henry III, were thus put out of the way; Coligny, likewise, though his death was only one incident in the huge and premeditated massacre of Protestants—organised by the party of the Guises with the connivance of Catherine de' Medicis, of her third son Henry, Duke of Anjou, and of the king himself—carried out on *the eve of St. Bartholomew* (August 24, 1572). We are dealing with men lost to all moral sense, practically insane with hatred and party passion. A medal was struck in commemoration of St. Bartholomew's night. It represented, on the obverse, the king, crown on head, and bearing a sword and the hand of justice, trampling a heap of corpses and severed heads under his feet with the device, *Virtus in rebelles* (Courage against rebels!). On the reverse it bore the escutcheon of France, wreathed in laurel and the words, *Pietas excitavit justitiam* (Piety has aroused justice), with the date, August 24, 1572. Two thousand corpses strewed the streets of Paris, and three or four times as many those of the provincial towns.

St. Bartholomew, 1572

B. *The great events*

Under Francis II and Charles IX, each party had successes and reverses in turn. The Protestants, however, were the greatest sufferers, particularly in the loss of their chiefs, nearly all of whom fell. In 1574 the only man of the first rank left them was Henry, King of Navarre. The Catholics retained the support of the Guises, whose head, Henry, known as *le Balafré*, was a man of unusual enterprise and unbounded ambition. Under Henry III, a man quite incompetent to maintain the royal prestige, we see the religious war more methodically conducted, and the questions at issue extending in scope. In 1576, in the peace of Beaulieu, the king disavowed the massacre of St. Bartholomew, promised reparation and made considerable concessions to the Protestants. The dissatisfaction of the Catholics with this arrangement led them, in furtherance of closer association among themselves, to institute the *Holy League*, which gave them cohesion and a programme, "*to establish the law of God*" as against the Huguenots and to safeguard the rights of the seigneurs. The Holy League was, in fact, at base as much seigneurial as Catholic: *its real head was the Duke of Guise*. The Protestants, in their turn, compacted their own union. Underlying the seigneurial agitation was evidently a kind of pseudo-feudal attempt to abolish the authority of the king; an anachronistic project but hopeful enough to result in deep and durable disturbance. The pretexts advanced are at the same time the *public good* and the *good of religion*. Henry of Guise privily proposed to substitute himself for the worn-out Valois, and with the aid of the Church to possess himself of the crown. He also claimed descent from Charlemagne. But his main strength lay in his considerable popularity with the fanatical Catholics, especially in Paris.

1. The struggle under Francis II and Charles IX

2. Under Henry III

The *League*

Reasonable men, officers of justice, and the higher bourgeois fully appreciated the harm done to France and even to religion by these bickerings and intrigues. They were given the name of *Politicals*. They might preach concord but had no means of enforcing it.

The party of *Politicals*

The Duke of Guise and Henry III

The Duke of Guise found two circumstances in his favour. King Henry III was lacking in the decision and energy which might have raised him above both parties. The heir presumptive, his cousin, Henry of Navarre, was a Protestant,[14] a disquieting fact for the Catholics. Obliged to abjure on St. Bartholomew's night, he had returned to the Reformation. Guise made a secret compact against him with the King of Spain, and obtained from the pope a declaration that Henry was incapable of receiving the crown of France. The king, acting under his mother's advice, attempted to apply, between the Leaguers and the Huguenots, between Guise and Henry of Navarre, her old policy of seesaw. But Navarre beat the royal forces at Coutras[15] (1587); Guise attempted to possess himself of the person of Henry III and failed, but a riot in Paris—"*the day of barricades*" of the 12th of May, 1588—made him master of that city, and convinced him that he was in a position to impose his will on the king. The latter, feigning submission, enticed the duke and his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, to Blois, under the pretext of a meeting of the States-General, had both killed by his retainers (December 23, 1588), and proceeded to join hands with the King of Navarre.

Murder of the duke

The League against the king

This murder raised to the highest pitch the fanatical fury of the League. It passed under the command of the Duke of Mayenne, brother of Henry of Guise, and furious demonstrations, dramatic processions and fiery preachments exalted the enthusiasm and revolutionary spirit of the Parisians. Henry III, accompanied by the King of Navarre, laid siege to the capital, and was poignarded by a fanatic monk, named *Jacques Clément*, at Saint-Cloud on the 1st of August, 1589. Blood had called for blood.

Murder of the king (1589)

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[14] The youngest brother of Henry III, the Duke of Anjou, died in 1584, and the king had no direct heir.

[15] Coutras, in the present department of the Gironde, arrondissement of Libourne.

8. Henry IV: opposition he met with

Henry of Navarre became legally king under the name of Henry IV. But his relationship to the late king had been remote; his cousinship was no nearer than the twenty-first remove; rights so remote were not sufficient in themselves for an undisputed title, and were refused recognition by the Leaguers. The papal decision gave them authority for this refusal while, in addition, in 1584, by a convention with Philip II, the Duke of Guise had stipulated that the heir of Henry III should be Charles of Bourbon, cardinal and already old,[16] but useful to effect a transition from the Valois to a new royal family. Henry III had made sure of his person by immuring him in 1588 in a stronghold at Fontenay-le-Comte, where he was to die on the 9th of May, 1590. Mayenne had him proclaimed king, under the name of Charles X; he had taken for himself the title of "lieutenant-general of the State and crown of France." He counted on assistance from the Spaniards.

Henry IV and the *Politicals*

Henry IV had few material resources, but he had the courage to hold his own on the north of the Loire, where his enemies seemed to have the upper hand. He was, moreover, a man of great ability. His moderation and headlong courage soon gained him adherents, while the excesses and dissensions of the Leaguers discredited Mayenne. The *Politicals*, little by little, grew stronger and stronger, rallying to their side men not yet completely deprived of common sense; they had from the first declared themselves for Henry IV. Some military successes over Mayenne (battle of Arques[17] in 1589, and of Ivry in 1590) strengthened Navarre. His best ally of all was the ambition of Philip II, who on the death of the Cardinal of Bourbon (1590) laid claim to the crown of France for his daughter Isabella, whose mother was a sister of Henry III. This claim opened the eyes of many French Catholics to the

Pretensions of Philip II

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[16] The third son of Charles, Duke of Vendôme, who belonged to the house of Bourbon. He was born in 1520, and was thus sixty-nine in 1589.

[17] Arques in the Seine-Inférieure, arrondissement of Dieppe. Ivry in the Eure, arrondissement of Evreux.

secret designs of the League, and the Politicals did not fail to turn this to the advantage of the king who was truly a Frenchman. Mayenne, on his side, disquieted at his own career which he had pictured as a copy of le Balafré's, suddenly found his enthusiasm for the Spanish alliance to be waning. Henry IV, who had promised that he would turn Catholic, was easily able to pose as the candidate of union bent on the reconciling of all good Frenchmen.

The *Satire Ménippée*

The action of the *Politicals*

The Politicals, emboldened by the hesitation and division of the Leaguers, set themselves to work. The *Satire Ménippée*, a political pamphlet, the work of a small group of Parisian bourgeois, was first circulated in manuscript in 1593; in 1594 it was printed to sow broadcast throughout France its bitter criticisms of the Spanish intrigue, of the divagations of the League, and of the folly of Mayenne, to which was opposed an eloquent eulogy of peace and the legitimate king. When the *Satire Ménippée* reached its widest circulation Henry had retaken Paris; but the ideas it expressed had been long those of the enlightened bourgeoisie. The Politicals induced Parliament to pass an act which excluded all foreign claimants from the throne of France. The pope, Sixtus V, himself appreciated that there was no longer any candidate "*possible in France but the Béarnais, who should return to the faith of his ancestors.*"

Conversion of the king to Catholicism

He recovers the kingdom

Return he did, from policy, perhaps rather than conviction, but as conspicuously as possible: his abjuration was made on the 25th of July, 1593, at Saint-Denis, before the Archbishop of Bourges. Less than a year later Paris opened her gates to him (March 22, 1594); the Spanish garrison evacuated the town under the sardonic eye of the king; the Sorbonne deleted the most compromising resolutions and decisions from its records, while, at the same time, Parliament revoked the powers of the Duke of Mayenne and all acts inspired by the League (March 30). A universal longing for peace and repose swept all opposition away.

Henry IV was careful to do nothing precipitately; fair words, promises, liberality in matters both great and small, and, when it was necessary, a firm hand, regained him town after town and province after province. His absolution and acceptance by the pope, which came on the 17th of September, 1595, finally discouraged the last Leaguers, and Mayenne himself made submission (January, 1596). He sold at a high price a submission which he could no longer postpone.

The Edict of Nantes, 1598

A solemn edict re-established religious peace in France. This was the *Edict of Nantes*, signed on the 13th of April, 1598. It determined the status of the Huguenots in France, granted them liberty of conscience: immunity from prosecution for religious reasons, civil equality with the Catholics (that is, equal admission to all public employments), free exercise of their worship in their own houses, in all towns where it existed in 1596, and in two localities in every *bailliage*, the creation of a bi-party chamber composed of both Protestant and Catholic judges in the three Parliaments of Grenoble, Toulouse and Bordeaux, for the judgment of Protestant cases; finally the right to retain a garrison for eight years in about two hundred strongholds or châteaux, as security pending the full trial of the new *modus vivendi.* This edict, most moderate, and, as far as was possible, equitable, was intended by Henry IV to pave the way to the reconciliation of all his subjects in a practical tolerance. The fanatics in either camp naturally gave it a cold reception; but the king proceeded to put it into operation.

The treaty of Vervins

One more effort was needed to establish full peace. The King of Spain, in spite of the failure of his hopes, had not laid down his arms, and his troops were still ravaging the north of the kingdom. Henry IV, despairing of obtaining effective help from Elizabeth of England at a reasonable price—she wished to be paid by the restitution of Calais—decided, as he put it, to "*faire le roi de Navarre*" (to behave once more as the King of Navarre) this time in Picardy. A single campaign vigorously conducted decided Philip to sign the treaty of *Vervins* (1598) by which he renounced all claim to the French crown.

Conclusion

Complexity of period of the Reformation

The king and France in 1598

The Renaissance, the Reformation, the last struggles of feudal individualism, the persistent desire of the nobles for independence, and, in a manner, the rivalry between the two houses of France and Austria, had thus all combined to engender and prolong the terrible troubles through which France and her kings had now passed. The king, finally victorious, found himself personally stronger than ever before, but France, ravaged by opposing factions, pillaged by armed force, long deprived of good government, was in a pitiful state. The iconoclastic fury of the Huguenots had in particular destroyed many works of the religious art of the Middle Ages, whose loss is a misfortune for all time. Henry IV, a man of clear and realistic mind and a king devoted to his work, was in a good position to appreciate the evil, and to devise remedies. Ably seconded by his friend *Sully*, he went to work without delay and soon obtained results of the highest importance in the economic restoration of his kingdom. Unfortunately his work was cut short with his life. In 1610 he was to fall a victim to the dagger of a Catholic, a fanatic named *Ravaillac*.

Importance of the Reformation in making of the modern spirit

The attention of any student of this troubled period is most easily attracted by the dramatic and violent episodes in which it abounds and thus is apt to overlook the profound transformations, complementary to those resulting from the Renaissance, which this spiritual cyclone was to produce in the French spirit. For reasons mainly political the Reformation did not succeed in France, and yet did not completely fail. It introduced a dividing element which was not without serious and practical inconveniences, not only in the sixteenth century but also subsequently. The Reformation, however, also played its part in the moulding of the modern spirit.

Liberty in Protestantism

In our own time it has been justly said: *Protestantism is liberty or it is nothing.* The Reformers were not, in practice, friends of liberty, and Calvin, in particular among others, remained a terrible doctrinaire, an implacable upholder of authority. They were men of their own harsh and dogmatic time. Nevertheless in justification of their attitude towards the Roman Church, and in order to found their own churches, they had vigorously asserted the *principle of free examination,* and this principle, however little they suspected it, was pregnant with liberty in many forms, subordinating as it did authority to reason. Its inevitable corollary was the *principle of free criticism,* the foundation of the intellectual and moral life of today.

Free examination and *free criticism*

The idea of *tolerance*

Another modern idea was brought to birth not only in the domain of political compromises and agreements between adversaries, each obliged to tolerate the other for want of power to annihilate him, but, if I may say so, on the plane of reason and of conscience: I refer to the *idea of tolerance* so foreign to the Middle Ages. It inspired the policy of Michel de l'Hôpital and that of Henry IV as the best safeguard against the public peril arising from religious dissensions. It also inspired, directly and theoretically, Sébastien Castellion when he claimed in 1553 "*qu'il fût loysible à chacun d'adorer Dieu suivant la foy non d'austruy, mais la sienne*" (it should be legal for every one to worship God not according to another's faith, but according to his own), and when he denied to Calvin, who had just caused Michel Servet to be burnt for having thought wrongly of the Trinity, the right of persecuting heretics. Here we have one of the essential affirmations of the modern conscience in which it most completely contradicts the mediaeval conscience. The rough experience with the religious wars made many men of good sense adhere to this audacity of a man in advance of his time.

Sébastien Castellion

The Catholic Reform and its spirit

The Catholic Church no less had undergone reform. This work had been carried out under the authority of the pope, by a council held at Trent from 1545 to 1564, in which the influence of the Company of Jesus had been dominant. This was a new order, founded in Paris in 1540 by the Spaniard, *Ignatius Loyola.* This remarkable effort had effectively repaired the relaxed Catholic discipline and remedied the disorder of the clergy. Unfortunately, undertaken as it was entirely in a spirit of reaction and of opposition to the Protestants, it had sought to consolidate the theology of the Middle Ages in the form given it by St. Thomas Aquinas and to restore the *supremacy of authority.* In other words, the Catholic Church had attempted to crystallise herself in the forms of the past at the risk of creating the gravest difficulties for herself in the future, and of being outstripped by life, to which she had so long shown the way.

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CHAPTER XX

ESTABLISHMENT OF ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

I

The royal power at the start of the sixteenth century

WITH the beginning of the sixteenth century the ancient Roman and ecclesiastical conception of royal absolutism begins to triumph in France. First held as a theoretical principle by the Capet kings, afterwards brought into practical operation by the legists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, finally favoured by the disappearance of the great feudal noblesse and by the failure of the bourgeois to impose control by the States-General on the king, it had yet to find expression in the form of a coherent government and a regular and unified administration. Although, in actual fact, no opinion now contested the *personal authority* of the king, or his right to obedience when he gave an order *himself*, *the principle of submission to his agents was far from being similarly accepted.*

What it still lacks

Obviously, the respect of every State functionary, working within the limits of his duty, is a necessary condition to the proper regulation of public affairs. In other respects the organisation of the kingdom still left much to be desired. The habits of the time tolerated a confusion and incoherence in institutions, highly detrimental to the good conduct of public business, and fruitful of many disputes between one administrative department and another as to their respective jurisdictions. In modern States it has become usual and legitimate to abolish any institution which appears to have become inoperative and to call for alteration. In the Middle Ages, *successive institutions were commonly superimposed one upon another* *without the abolition of any.* One which had gradually become worn out, and no longer responded to any contemporary need, continued to totter along side by side with another which experience had gradually evolved and perfected. Therefore, it is no easy matter for us to see clearly when one institution ends or when another begins.

Opposing and resisting elements

Finally, though no principle opposed it, the development and consolidation of royal absolutism came into conflict with personal interests strong enough to resist and retard its advance: those of the *nobles* by birth, of the *officials of the law* who formed a kind of secondary nobility—we shall see why in a moment—and, at the end of the sixteenth century after the Edict of Nantes, those of the *Protestants,* who formed a corporate body within the State.

Chronological stages

For these reasons, the establishment of absolute monarchy in France, beginning formally with Francis I, will not be accomplished until the beginning of Louis XIV's personal government in 1661. The work is carried through, upon no preconceived plan, in *four distinct stages,* separated by periods of disturbance and reaction and corresponding to the reigns of *Francis I* (1515-1547) and *Henry II* (1547-1559); of *Henry IV* (1589-1610); to the ministries of *Richelieu* (1624-1642) under Louis XIII (1610-1643); and of *Mazarin* (1643-1661) during the minority and youth of Louis XIV.

II

First Stage (1515-1559)

Absolutist ideas of Francis I

There can be no doubt as to the intentions of Francis I to be absolute. They are reflected by his firm conviction that it is *his right* to be obeyed. In his use of certain clean-cut and perhaps somewhat curt formulas such as "*I am the king, it is my will to be obeyed,*" or "*Since such is our pleasure,*" his attitude in his own eyes was in no respect either encroaching or arrogant. He simply expressed the recognised fact that he was the sovereign, and the admitted principle that *the will and the word of the prince determined what was the law.*

The *court:* its influences

In the assemblage about him of nobles, solicitous for his favour, in the brilliant and festive life which he led in their company, encouraging and accustoming them to shrink from no expense which might help *to sustain their rank,* and to bring them notice from himself, Francis I virtually created in France what we know as *the court,* the sumptuous framework essential to an absolute monarch, whose authority rests not merely upon principles but also very largely on *the prestige of the royal person.* The courtiers, from the highest rank to the lowest, became habituated little by little to be merely the king's *servants.* The Italian wars, developing more than ever before a taste for luxury and refinement in France, hastened this social evolution in the highest classes of the kingdom. We must remember that by that time no independent feudality survived. The confiscation of the property of the house of Bourbon after the treason of the Constable, its head, in 1523, the disappearance of the house of Alençon in 1525, and the extinction of the principal branches of the house of Armagnac had made the royal domain practically co-extensive with the limits of the kingdom. The house of Albret alone, heir to the house of Foix, held in the South and Centre, outside its kingdom of Lower Navarre and of Béarn, a certain number of fiefs which gave it a certain amount of power. The other seigneurs are no longer more than landowners of greater or lesser wealth, and though their authority over their immediate subjects may still be considerable they themselves are, without exception, under the authority of the king.

The condition of the nobility at this time

The provinces

At the same time a new territorial organisation tends to become established in France in the form of a division of the kingdom into *provinces,* each of which groups several *bailliages* under a single *governor.* Under Francis I a dozen or so of these provinces may be seen in process of establishment: Isle de France, Normandy, Picardy, Brittany, Guyenne and Gascony, Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiné, Auvergne, Lyonnais, Burgundy and Champagne. These divisions, however, neither include the whole of the royal territory nor are they so far absolutely defined. Their character is in no sense that of a considered institution established on a certain date by a definite decree, but of an empirical device, slowly becoming more widely applied as the king finds that it is successful and convenient. The drawback to this procedure is that the provincial framework is superimposed on others which it leaves unchanged and not even simplified, so that instead of proving effective in establishing administrative unity it leaves a number of local customs, particularities and privileges to survive by its side. French royalty will never achieve complete unification because it will never feel the need of taking the work in hand from the foundation upwards and of logically reconstructing upon a really considered plan its whole territorial and administrative organisation.

Their want of definition

The central government

The same haphazard empiricism prevails in the organisation of the central government which begins under Francis I and his son. Side by side with some favourite who is practically the head of the government on behalf of the king (such, for instance, as under Francis I, after Louise of Savoy, his mother, Admiral Bonnivet and the Constable of Montmorency, and under Henry II, the same Montmorency) a *Governing Council* in some degree regular but still vague, is to be seen and some *Secretaries of State* (four under Henry II) who tend to specialise and are the precursors of *ministers*. At this time their province is, in the main, to receive, classify and examine, each for his own territorial section of the kingdom, petitions and requisitions addressed to the king and to decide what answers are to be given. From 1555 onwards, royal commissioners, who recall the *enquesteurs* of St. Louis and the *missi* of Charlemagne, make *chevauchées* or tours of inspection in the provinces to see that finance and law are properly conducted. Fundamentally, we are still in the presence of a theoretically personal government by the king, surrounded by his *palatines* and his *curia*, an ancient system which no longer fulfils new necessities and which opens the way to multifarious personal abuses. Even in its centre, the legitimate hope, entertained by every enterprising courtier, of rising to the position of favourite and of governing on behalf of the king, encourages intrigue and factions among the nobles.

Its general character

The life of the court is extremely expensive, and the policy of conquest and the pursuit of prestige followed by Francis I and Henry II consume huge sums of money, far beyond the normal resources of either prince. They are thus never able to balance their finances—*this will always be a weak point in the French monarchy.* The king, to obtain the money which he needs, becomes accustomed to borrow large sums from his subjects, which he does not repay, but on which he pays interest; thus the lending of money to the prince becomes a usual form of investment and is the origin of the *State Funds*. The Valois-Angoulême princes found yet another way to raise revenue. They began the *sale of offices* or public appointments, particularly in the law. They even went so far as to create posts for which no need had arisen merely in order to sell them. This practice had several troublesome drawbacks: in the first place, it substituted a commercial transaction for choice according to merit; secondly, it caused an untimely multiplication of *privileges*, it being necessary to attach privileges, mainly fiscal, to the different offices as an inducement to the buyer; and further, it weighed heavily on the subjects, particularly on suitors, since the *official*, having paid a high price for his post, sought to reimburse himself as quickly as possible. Above all, it created a new nobility, distinct from the class of the *ennobled*, already mentioned, which was named *the nobility of the robe* (from the robe then worn by magistrates and civil officers in the exercise

The question of money

The loans

Sale of offices

Its drawbacks

Nobility of the robe

of their functions). Since the king was normally unable to repay the price of offices thus sold, the buyers transmitted them to their heirs as an asset of recognised value. Families which thus held posts in Parliament or the other *Sovereign Courts* (Court of Accounts, Court of Aids and High Council), not only obtained ennoblement, but acquired so much authority in the State as soon to form practically a *real caste.* They have their own esprit de corps, their own interests, and can, on occasion, show some independence in face of even the king himself.

The Church subordinated to the king

On the other hand, at the same time, the Church had fallen entirely under the sway of the prince. The *Concordat of 1516,* concluded between Francis I and the pope, *abolished the episcopal and abbatial elections* so that henceforth ecclesiastical dignitaries are nominated by the king. His control of the richest benefices thus subordinates the clergy to his will. He may still have difficulties with the Holy See, but will have practically none in the future with the Gallican Church. One more obstacle to absolutism thus disappears and the time is not far distant when the Church, so far from opposing, will justify and authenticate the most exorbitant claims of the king to represent God on earth.

The spirit of absolutism of Francis I and Henry II

Thus Francis I and Henry II, who might, if they had chosen to do so, have given a coherent and logical organisation to their kingdom, took no heed of the question and were content, without any attempt to govern circumstances, to profit by such facilities as these offered them to do as they pleased. In their hands the progress of the royal power was a matter of pure chance uncontrolled by any comprehensive plan.

III

Second stage (1589-1610)

When, at the end of the religious wars, Henry IV found himself master, the situation was far from favourable. All the

The situation at the end of the Religious Wars

factors of disorder, favoured by the disturbances, had regained vigour. Many persons of rank, especially the provincial governors, without contesting the king's right to give orders, had become accustomed to obey them no longer. Many a country squire behind his stout crenellated walls held himself lord and master of his lands and his neighbourhood; all common discipline was rejected. The country, so long ill-governed, drained dry by fighting men, had seen its wealth cut off at its sources and was apparently ruined; the royal treasury was empty and the too evident distress of a great part of the population left little hope of its early replenishment.

Ideas and character of Henry IV. He re-establishes his authority

Henry IV had no intention of making the least abatement in his claims to authority. He was no less convinced of his right to obedience than Francis I himself; at the same time he was prudent, discreet and practical and realised clearly the impolicy of any abruptness in action. He made excellent use of his superior personal qualities, which included the winning good-fellowship of a Southerner and exceptional firmness of will. Little by little he brought his rights into operation. Such resistance as he encountered he soon discouraged or broke down. Plots were made against him. He treated the plotters first with indulgence, then with severity. In 1602 he had the Duke of Biron, Governor of Burgundy, decapitated though he was an old companion of his days of stress and strain, whom he had once pardoned but who had renewed an intrigue with the Spaniard.

His activity

Diligent, active, economical, surrounded with excellent servants, the chief of whom was the *Duke of Sully*, he did his best to re-establish order, to repair the damage done by the bad years, to restore well-being to his subjects, to recuperate financially. Without making any change from the principles of his predecessors, or any sensible modification in their institutions, he achieved excellent results by *personal action*.

With security restored to the countryside the peasants re-

Enterprise in the restoration of the kingdom

turned to their labour: to encourage them, the king gave them some relief from taxation. He took great interest in the introduction of new plants for cultivation, notably in that of the mulberry for the raising of silkworms; he had highways and roads reconstructed, initiated important works for the improvement of the navigation of rivers and to connect one with another, for the draining of marshes to increase cultivable land. He reorganised industry and trade upon the basis of the corporation. Against the opposition of Sully himself, who was too exclusively favourable to agriculture, he encouraged the introduction into France of various luxury trades, whose product, having become necessary to foreigners, might be sold to them at a high price; gold thread, flint glass, tapestry and the like. Foreign trade was similarly reconstructed, diverse agreements favourable to French merchants were concluded, great commercial companies were projected, and a first step was made towards the colonisation of Canada from 1598 onwards and under the advice of *Samuel Champlain*, the first buildings of a town, which was afterwards to become *Quebec*, were erected on the banks of the St. Lawrence River in 1608.

Results obtained

But these were no more than experiments and beginnings. Henry IV had too little money at his disposal to do much more, and Sully, considerably less enterprising than his master, held him back. Yet even considered as no more than *velléités* and intentions, these efforts of the king, applied to so many different objects, vividly attest his intelligence and activity. At least, *they gave him popularity.* In spite of the heavy burden of taxation, which indeed could hardly have been lighter, his people well realised how kindly and well-intentioned towards them were the feelings of the gay and vivacious son of Béarn. Their assent enabled him to effect an adequate financial reconstruction, and even to amass a sufficient reserve fund, carefully put away under the guardianship of Sully in the cellars of the Bastille.

The absolute king still appeared in men's eyes as the servant of the State and the father of his subjects.

The king and the three obstacles to absolutism

Henry IV allowed himself to be swayed neither by the great lords, nor by the Parliament, nor by the Protestants. His personal authority was always able to assert itself over the intrigues of the first-named, over the claims of the second, inclined to play the part of a *Political Body*, over the encroachments of the last, inclined to confound their rights of conscience with influence in the State, but he did nothing whatever to secure his successors from the dangers and embarrassments which these three recalcitrant elements might cause them. It was not that he was incapable of foresight and of provision for the future: the man who ordained and carried out the reforms imposed on the Universities and Colleges since the re-establishment of peace, well understood that no solid foundation can be laid without thought for the future. But presumably he could not devise practical means of modifying a situation which he thought only time could render more favourable to the unity of the kingdom and the full exercise of the royal authority under the guidance of a ruler equal in firmness to himself.

1. The nobility

2. The officials of justice and finance

While he punished such of the great as betrayed him he neither weakened the nobility nor encroached on its privileges. As to the officers of justice, he encouraged their esprit de corps and consolidated their independence by renouncing in exchange for an annual payment the right of resumption which he possessed over offices which changed ownership when the vendor of an office did not live at least forty days after its transfer. On the advice of a financier named Paulet the king gave up the forty days on the condition that the *officials* made him an annual payment, amounting in effect to a premium of insurance, of one-sixtieth of the price of the post. This contribution was called the *Paulette*. It brought a great revenue into the royal treasury (about one million French livres). But it

The *Paulette*

led rapidly to the effective inheritance of judicial and financial posts, although the king had clearly specified that he should always have the power to pay off and resume a vacancy. With inheritance secured, the offices in question came to command enormous market prices, far in excess of the sums originally paid for them.[1] Yet their subjects and suitors gained nothing from this, since the *officials* always sought to amortise at their expense the huge capital which they had been obliged to pledge or immobilise in payment for their posts.

3. The Protestants

As for the Protestants, the securities granted them by the Edict of Nantes, particularly the many strongholds where they had received the right to military organisation, gave them opportunities, in the event of personal weakness on the king's part, to foment revolts which might be extremely dangerous.

Personal character of the work of Henry IV

Thus the work of Henry IV, interrupted as it was in full course by his assassination,[2] was able to do no more than deal with the crying evils of the present. It established no security whatever for the future. It rested entirely upon the person and prestige of the man to whom it was due.

IV

Third Stage (1610-1642)

A. Mary de' Medicis as regent

The new king, Louis XIII, was only nine years old. In the general confusion caused by the murder of Henry IV among his ministers and his entourage, the queen, Mary de' Medici, applied to the Parliament, who declared her queen-regent. This apparent recognition of the political pretensions of the High Court of Justice was highly injudicious. It was in vain that, when the first emotion had spent itself, the queen-regent affected to forget the origin of the decree which had placed power in her hands. A formidable precedent had been established and one which the Parliamentarians would not forget.

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[1] This *Paulette* provoked violent and long-continued recriminations, particularly among the nobles. It was originally established for nine years only, beginning from the 12th of December, 1604, but it was not abolished until the Revolution and disappeared only on the 16th of November, 1790.

[2] The assassin was a fanatical Catholic named Ravaillac, who poignarded the king on the 14th of May, 1610.

Her weakness

Mary of Medicis was in no way qualified to comprehend or to continue the work of Henry IV, a fact that the forces of agitation and ambition were not long in appreciating. The old Huguenot, Duplessis-Mornay, in his saying, "*The king is minor, let us be major,*" expressed what may be considered the motto of all who at that time hoped to extract profit from the weakness of the royal government. The queen-regent had at first retained the ministers of Henry IV, but after January, 1611, Sully, finding that his advice was not listened to, retired to his estates.

Concini rules her

In reality, a kind of secret *Camarilla* had obtained control. It was directed by *Leonora Galigaï*, foster-sister of the queen, and by her husband, *Concini*, who was made marquis and marshal; its policy was inspired by a Jesuit, Coton, the king's confessor, and by the papal nuncio; both looked mainly to the interests of the Catholic Church. On their side, Léonora and Concini were mostly eager to make their fortunes.

Adversaries of the royal power become bolder

This government, incapable and irresolute, was very different in trend and in spirit from that of Henry IV, and gave excellent openings for adversaries of the royal authority. Not only did the Parliamentarians, puffed up with their own importance, assume the airs of a political party, with a mission to fulfil and a right to control the king's activities, but the great nobles, greedy for grants and over-paid posts, for privileges of all kinds, became bold enough to combine and take up arms in order to impose their will upon the queen-regent. Simultaneously, the Protestants, disturbed by the Spanish sympathies of the government and by its Catholic policy, organised on their own account what amounted to a republic in the West and the South of the kingdom. Wherever the queen-regent could convey and exhibit the young king to the people he met with gratifying signs of loyalty and devotion,

Personal prestige of the king

but out of his presence, insurrection was rife. The disgraceful favour shown to Concini and his coterie supplied a reason, or at least a pretext, to the malcontents.

Insurrection of the great nobles

The great nobles, bargaining with the queen-regent as one power with another, obtained from her, under a formal treaty, signed at *Sainte-Menehould*[3] a lavish distribution of money and favours. The sole object of each was the furtherance of his own interests and all acted accordingly. They succeeded, however, in so masking their base greed in fine phrases about the good of the kingdom as to compel the government to convoke the States-General in the year 1614.

The States-General of 1614

It was not that there was no work to be done by an assembly of the representatives of the nation. But unfortunately the rights of the States were ill-defined and the deputies, suspected from the first by the court of ill-will and systematic opposition, had no chance of effecting any reform unless they succeeded in maintaining unity among themselves. Efforts of the States of 1614 were quite fruitless, because the three *orders* among which their members were divided, *the Clergy*, *the Nobility* and *the Third Estate*, could come to no agreement among themselves. Extremely animated exchanges of speech took place between the orators of the respective parties under very diverse circumstances, all vividly illustrating the social incoherence of France; the various classes which lived side by side in the kingdom had neither the same mentality nor the same interests, nor indeed any sentiment of solidarity. The two privileged orders showed themselves, at most, capable of momentary coalition against the Third Estate which they looked down on and whose monetary power they feared. They regarded them, in fact, as no more than so many pursy burghers who had made money or as *officials*, who owed their importance to the *Paulette*. To humiliate them they professed to consider them as the social equals of the common folk. When a speaker of the Third Estate said

Discord between the three orders

Conflict

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[3] A chief town of arrondissement in the department of the Marne.

"*that the three Orders were three brothers, children of France, their common mother,*" that the clergy were "*the first born, the nobility the second son, the Third Estate the youngest*" and "*that the nobility should recognise the Third Estate as its brother and not so despise it as to regard it as nothing at all,*" the nobles protested: "*they declined to be called brothers by the sons of shoemakers and cobblers, between whom and themselves there was as much difference as between master and valet.*" People of this kind were much more eager for the abolition of the Paulette than to discover remedies for the evils in which the abandonment of the methods of government of the late king had quickly involved the peasant classes. The Third Estate, with greater justice, demanded that the pensions served out to the great lords should be reduced.

Futility of the Assembly

The court profited by these disagreements to make no concessions to the States, and dismiss them with vague promises. This meeting of the States, the last to be held till 1789, had done little except to enable the three orders to tell each other hard truths about themselves and to present problems which were to be solved in the end only by the Revolution. The agitation of the opposing parties against the government of Concini became more vigorous than ever, each doing its best to obtain fresh concessions from the queen-regent and usually succeeding in doing so. Finally, a plot organised by the entourage of the young king and with his complicity, put an end, at one blow, to the power and the life of Concini, who was killed by a captain of the Guard as he was entering the Louvre (April 24, 1617). His wife, Leonora Galigaï, was executed as a sorceress and the queen-mother was compelled to withdraw from the court. She was accompanied on her departure by a young prelate, who had, by her favour, held for some months the post of secretary of State and had already given signs of remarkable energy and exceptional strength of character. His name was *Armand du Plessis de Richelieu*, and

The end of Concini

he was Bishop of Luçon in Vendée. His hour was not yet come but it was near at hand.

d'Albert de Luynes in power

Louis XIII fell under the influence of the man who had conducted the plot against Concini, one of the lesser gentry of Provence, *Charles d'Albert de Luynes*, who had won his confidence in his post of "Master of the King's Mews"; that is to say, of the king's falcons and other birds of sport. While he was undoubtedly an improvement on Concini he had his fortune to make, besides that of his family, which more or less kept him in leading-strings, and he was at grips with difficulties which he had not the capacity to overcome. The queen-mother, Mary de' Medicis, became the moving spirit in a new agitation of the nobles which ended in resort to arms and a treaty concluded as though between foreign powers. (Treaty of Angers, 10th of August, 1620.)

Intrigues of the queen-mother

Rising of Protestants

Furthermore, the Catholic policy of de Luynes and the re-establishment of Catholicism in Béarn, in fulfilment of a promise originally made by Henry IV to the pope to which the young king had agreed under the pressure of a General Assembly of the Clergy (June, 1617) had provoked a serious rising of Protestants in the South (December, 1620). The favourite, who had assumed the sword of Constable, conducted the king against them; the campaign was unfortunate. After some successes the royal army failed to capture Montauban (August-November, 1621) and the Constable fell ill and died before the little stronghold of Monheurt.[4]

Death of de Luynes

His successors

Influence of Mary of Medicis

There was no lack of candidates for his post; ready, that is, to govern France in the name of Louis XIII, incapable of reigning by himself. Mary de' Medici, inspired by Richelieu whom she had retained as her adviser, finally obtained the upper hand, after the Huguenots, much divided among themselves as to their attitude towards the king, had made peace with him (October 18, 1622) at Montpellier. Mary de' Medicis succeeded in overcoming the opposition of Louis XIII, who had not forgotten how Richelieu, a cardinal since the 5th of September, 1622, had served under Concini—and obtained the appointment of the prelate to the royal council (April 29, 1624). Her hopes, that he would there remain devoted to herself, were highly disappointed. The cardinal set to work to win over the king by a display of zeal tempered with discretion and by encouraging his mania of suspecting all men. He instilled into him, step by step, an aversion for his chief minister, La Vieuville, which ended in the arrest of the latter and the gift of his place to Richelieu (August, 1624), a day when France at last received a real master.

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[4] In the department of Lot et Garonne and arrondissement of *Nérac*.

Richelieu as councillor

As minister

B. *The ministry of Richelieu*

Richelieu and the king

Richelieu had been born in 1585; he was thus about forty years old. He often was ill, but the strength of his will and the lucidity of his mind rose superior to bodily infirmity. Up till then he had appeared conciliatory, gentle and benignant, hard, imperious and violent though he really was. His ascendancy over the king for whom he governed was complete, but lifelong and continuous effort was needed to maintain it unimpaired over an apathetic and indifferent prince, who admired but had no affection for his minister and was often galled by thoughts of his dependence upon him. Richelieu, his influence once lost, would have fallen into a state of impotence in which he could look for no mercy from his foes, and he was in daily peril of losing it. Every day brought with it some fresh intrigue for his overthrow. The king had certain personal favourites, of whom some, for instance, Chalais at the beginning of the ministry and Cinq-Mars at its end, had great influence over him, which they attempted to use for the eviction of the cardinal. Two young ladies, Mademoiselle de Hautefort and Mademoiselle de Lafayette, who successfully conquered the affection of Louis XIII in an honest way, profited by their intimacy with him to stir up his feelings against his "master." The queen-mother, exasperated at finding that the man who

The opposition which he encountered

owed her everything had not only disregarded her entirely but was resolute to exclude her from power, was watching for an opportunity for revenge and gathered around her every available malcontent. Assisted by a serious illness of the king in 1630, she thought that she had recovered her ascendancy over him and went so far as to demand that he should choose "*between his mother and his valet.*" The young queen, Anne of Austria, was yet another intriguer in the same direction and, above all, Gaston of Orléans, the king's brother, lent his name and support to conspiracy after conspiracy. Plots of all kinds were attempted against the ministry, many of which even went to the length of civil war. Richelieu defended himself with savage energy, shrinking from no severity, handing over favourites and great lords alike to the executioner, after their trial by special commissioners of his own choice, meeting sometimes in his own house, sending Mary de' Medici to a miserable death in exile, humiliating Anne of Austria so far as to refuse to touch the hand which she held out to him at a moment when he had just convicted her of falsehood, disgracing Gaston of Orléans, unravelling plots and chastising rebels to the day of his death. When it is considered how much else there was to occupy his attention and call for his decision both in the government of the kingdom and in the conduct of European policy, it is no less than amazing that a man of infirm health should have been equal to so great a task.[5] He was sustained by one passionate devotion, for the "grandeur" of the king and for the power of France. A convinced absolutist, he declared that "*kings are the living images of the divinity*" and that, like the divinity, they have a right to instant obedience. He allowed neither discussion nor oppo-

His defence

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[5] He had come to understand that public opinion could give him substantial support. For this reason he attempted to influence it by circulating tracts justifying and praising his acts and deeds, and above all, by favouring the founding of the *Gazette de France* by Théophraste Renaudot (May, 1631). This was the first French periodical and was wholly devoted to his service.

sition where any command of the prince was concerned; they appeared to him as sacrilegious.

Obedience due to the minister as to the king: resistance to this principle

But as, in actual fact, the prince was himself, Louis XIII, being almost non-existent except as authenticating the ministerial decisions, the cardinal claimed in the same way that the authority of the monarch could be legitimately exercised by his ministerial intermediary, who consequently had an equal right to absolute submission, but Richelieu was never able to make this principle generally accepted and till the end of his life conspirators against him justified themselves by alleging that their principal object was to deliver the king from the clutch of the cardinal. Richelieu had thus to hold his own against the three great adversaries of absolutism—*the nobles, the Parliamentarians* and *the Protestants.*

Richelieu and the adversaries of absolutism

1. The struggle against the nobles

He was no foe to the principle of nobility by birth. On the contrary, he had anything but an affection for the classes which had supplanted the nobility in public employments and political influence: the great bourgeois functionaries more or less ennobled, and the men of money who were the aristocracy of business. But he was under no illusion as to the turbulence and incapacity of the great lords or as to their ill-will towards himself. In practice he ensured their obedience by force. He caused such of their strongholds, as were of no use for the defence of the kingdom, to be demolished and kept the seigneurs out of government business and the higher State employment. As early as 1627 they made bitter complaints on this subject to the king. Louis XIII, on the suggestion of his minister, made many fair promises but kept none of them. The malcontents then resorted to arms. Richelieu, regarding them as felonious traitors, proceeded against them with extreme rigour. It may be said that only one among them, Gaston of Orléans, was treated by him with any leniency, for the reason that up till 1638, when the future Louis XIV was born, he was heir presumptive to the crown as the brother of the king.

On the other hand his own friend, the Duke of Montmorency, Governor of Languedoc, one of the greatest lords in France, having revolted in his province, the cardinal despatched a small royal army against him. Montmorency, beaten at Castelnaudary, was picked up covered with wounds on the field of battle, cared for, and cured, and then tried, condemned to death and executed in spite of the supplications of the whole court in his favour. Disputed though his mastery was, Richelieu maintained it, owing to the excellence of his police force. He had the good fortune to escape assassination, which would have been the price of an instant's want of forethought. Yet he was unable to break down for the future either the ill-will or the power of action of the great nobles.

Precarious character of results attained

2. Attitude towards the Parliamentarians

Deferential to Parliament before he became minister—he had termed it the *Great Senate*—he afterwards became both imperious and curt; he declared openly that it was the part of the magistrates merely to register the king's ordinances, without comment or remonstrance. He thus kept them in strict dependence, making them mere implements of all work for the royal absolutism. Thus he compelled them to annul the marriage of Gaston of Orléans, which he regarded as unsatisfactory, and obliged them to pronounce the confiscation of the duchy of Bar; they obeyed, but meanwhile, in silence, were accumulating grievances and rancours against him and his principles. Certain of surviving him, at least as a constituted body, they awaited their opportunity for revenge, which arrived, as we shall see presently, not long after the death of their tyrant.

3. Struggle against the Protestants

Policy of the Huguenots

Richelieu obtained, on the other hand, decisive results in his contest with the Protestants. These, disquieted by the policy of Concini, by the marriage of Louis XIII with an Infanta of Spain (November, 1615), by the intentions attributed, rightly or wrongly, to de Luynes, led, furthermore, by a certain number of lords, no less restless and ambitious than the Catholics, had used and even abused the *securities* which they held under the Edict of Nantes. They had organised what was practically *a Huguenot republic* in the Southeast, the Centre and the South of the kingdom. They had had the unheard-of audacity to take up arms and make head *against the king himself*. They had even attempted, in their necessity, to obtain effective support from the Protestants of England. A minister so hostile to disorder and dispersion as Richelieu, could not long tolerate a state of things so pregnant with perils of all kinds. For this reason, from the moment of his first access to power, he apprised the king of his resolution to ruin the Huguenot party. Cardinal though he was, no religious passion impelled him and he had no design against the liberty of conscience of the Reformers, but he was determined that they should be no less completely under the king's authority than their fellow-subjects.

The resolutions of Richelieu

As a matter of fact, the Huguenots had seemed to take delight in annoying him. Profiting by his entanglement in European politics—he was endeavouring at that time to prevent Spain from joining hands with Austria in the upper valley of the Adda or Valteline—two Protestant chiefs, brothers, the Duke of Rohan and the Prince of Soubise, swayed by grievances more appropriate to partisans than to patriots, had taken up arms in 1625. The cardinal, compelled to exercise patience while he was occupied with more pressing tasks, did not then push matters to extremity. After some unimportant military operations he concluded a precarious peace in 1626, but, as soon as his hands were free, he made ready for a decisive blow. He judged this to be the more necessary since in 1627 the same Rohan and Soubise had made common cause with England, the English having broken with France and an English fleet having appeared before La Rochelle. While the Protestant communities, as a whole, were far from being reconciled to an alliance with the foreigner against a king to

The Protestant movement of 1625-1626

The decisive blow

whom they desired to remain loyal, there were, nevertheless, among the people and the smaller noblesse sufficient adherents to the rebel cause to make their participation a serious matter.

Capture of La Rochelle (1628)

Richelieu, with the king, proceeded to lay siege to La Rochelle, after having driven the English from the Isle of Ré. The town, energetically defended by Guiton, its mayor, was closely blockaded and in the end subdued by famine (October 28, 1628). The king then chased Rohan into the Cévennes and reduced his troops to submission.

The Edict of Alais (1629)

The cardinal, now master and free to impose his own conditions, did so with political discretion: *the Edict of Grace*, signed at *Alais*[6] on the 28th of June, 1629, pardoned the rebels and re-established the Edict of Nantes, but at the same time it caused the Protestants to lose all the strongholds which they had held as securities and also their right of assembly. In other words, they were stripped of the political power which they had usurped within the kingdom. They never recovered from this downfall, and in this respect, at least, the result attained by Richelieu was decisive.

C. *Government of Richelieu*

Circumstances which controlled it

The minister had a natural instinct for order, and a keen desire to create a well-organised government. Unfortunately, his continual anxiety over foreign affairs left him without the leisure necessary to devise and put into operation any comprehensive plan for the reconstruction of institutions. He accordingly contented himself with improving those already in existence, keeping always in view his main object of obtaining more definite and stronger authority for the king.

The central government: The Council

He greatly improved the central government by reorganising the *Council of State* in which he gave precedence to men who had been in the service of the government, those known as gentlemen of *the long robe*, over the pretentious and inexperienced aristocracy (*the short robe*). The latter could still obtain the honorific title of *councillor of the king's council,* but as a matter of fact business was kept entirely out of their hands. He encouraged the tendency, already mentioned, to establish *specialised sections* in the council and devoted a fixed day in each week to examination into the business of each of the principal departments. In other respects, although it was his deliberate policy to make no important decision without the advice of competent men, he reserved all final decisions upon essential questions under discussion to a secret and extremely exclusive council, over which, in the last resort, his own will could be sure to prevail. He also greatly improved the provincial government by exercising strict control over all governors. These he kept continually under the menace of recall or reduction in rank and, in case of need, he replaced them, for such a period as he judged advisable, by a *Lieutenant-general*, who was entirely in his own hands.

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[6] Now a chief town of arrondissement in the department of the Gard.

The Provincial government

Attempts at unification

He had hoped to unify the administrative organisation of provinces and towns, but the task proved too great for the time at his disposal. Attempts in this direction which his need for money induced him to make in such provinces as had still retained their own States and which he attempted to subject to the financial authority of the king's *élus* (delegates), involved him in great difficulties. In several places, for instance in Burgundy and in Provence, resistance went the length of grave revolt, and nowhere, except in Dauphiné, did the last word lie with the king, who was obliged to do without his *élus*, and allow the States some share at least of financial determination.

The Intendants

The kings, in order to ensure effective control of their provincial agents, had always had recourse to *enquêteurs* (inspectors), who went on circuit more or less periodically and regularly. Henry II particularly and Henry IV exercised control and kept themselves informed in this way. This method

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[7] The *"pays d'États"* (countries with States) were Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiné, Burgundy, Normandy and Brittany.

was equally employed during the first part of the reign of Louis XIII, when frequent disturbances made it particularly necessary. Richelieu resumed and extended the practice, appointing *Masters of Requests* [8] of the King's Council with the title of *Intendants of Police, Justice and Finance,* on missions of inspection, supervision and administration; these *intendants* are plenary representatives of the king wherever they are sent. *Richelieu did not create the intendants* as has been erroneously alleged; he did not establish them as a matter of course in each province, but *he used them for an experiment* as a new instrument for provincial centralisation which might be superimposed upon all others and which would counteract the inconvenient power of the king's officers, who were well on the way to create a real modern feudality in the provinces. The expedient appeared to him successful, though the diverse Parliaments had done their best to oppose it, and he recommended it to Mazarin, his special man of confidence. It was only little by little and under Louis XIV from 1650 onwards that this expedient became a permanent institution.[9] Nevertheless it was the cardinal who perceived the advantage which absolutism might derive from an extension and a stabilisation of the old usage.

Efforts to re-establish the wealth of France

Richelieu endeavoured to develop the wealth of France by every possible means, particularly by maritime commerce on a large scale and by colonies (Canada, the Antilles, Senegal, Madagascar). He lacked the time which was necessary to develop his plans—not always conceived on the best lines—and to conduct to successful ends enterprises for which experience was a prerequisite. Financial support was also needed and could not be afforded to an adequate extent by the State. The minister's ideas as to finance are extremely interesting. It was

Bad finance

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[8] These were functionaries whose duty was to draft reports of the requests and petitions addressed to the Council.

[9] Thus Béarn had no intendant till 1682, and Brittany none till 1689.

impossible for him to put them into practice owing to the constant and heavy expenses incidental to his foreign policy which he could cover only by excessive taxation. This he was obliged to raise within the traditional fiscal framework. The severity which he applied in its collection led to grave sedition on various occasions and in several provinces, in Burgundy (1630), in Provence (1631), in Lyons (1632), in Guyenne (1635), in Limousin and Poitou (1636), above all, in Normandy (1638-1639). These he ruthlessly repressed, believing that they were cases in which it was advisable to punish first and enquire afterwards.

Excessive taxation and revolts

His ministry was essentially one of severe hardship for the people. The praiseworthy devotion of a Vincent de Paul, who founded the association of the *Sisters of Charity* in 1633 and the work of the *Enfants trouvés* (Foundlings) in 1638, even aided as they were by the zeal of the *Company of the Holy Sacrament of the Altar*,[10] were sadly inadequate to the task. France had not yet recovered from the severe ordeal of the Religious Wars, and the vast designs pursued by the cardinal, outside France, were an insurmountable obstacle to the methodical and energetic resumption of the work of restoration commenced by Henry IV. His preoccupation with the greatness of the kingdom in the world was detrimental to his desire, sincere as it was, to govern it well.

Misery of the people

Altogether the cardinal is a new example of a statesman whose energy and authority accommodate themselves as best they can to a bad régime, who supplements the insufficiency of institutions by *personal action*, and who, in reality, does not greatly advance the organisation of the government which he

Personal character of the work of Richelieu

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[10] This was the name given to a *secret* association founded about 1630 by the Duke of Ventadour, whose object was to link together all works of charity and propaganda. Its members undertook the work of discovering and, as far as possible, succouring unfortunates, but also of keeping under surveillance, to ferret out and denounce to the magistrates people guilty of blasphemy and impiety. From this point of view the results of their pious zeal were not wholly fortunate.

has controlled. Not only did he leave, at his death (December 4, 1642), much still to be done for the effective establishment of absolute monarchy, but the unpopularity which his severity brought upon himself was extended to *the system* which he applied. He left a heavy burden to his successor. The *Reasons of State* before which he had insisted that all persons and all interests should give way and to which he himself had submitted in person assumed the guise of an appalling tyranny.

V

Fourth Stage (1643-1661)

Establishment of the regency of Anne of Austria

Louis XIII soon followed his minister to the tomb (May 14, 1643), the dauphin being not yet five years old. The king had neither affection nor esteem for his queen nor for his brother Gaston. He had therefore, by a Declaration registered by Parliament, organised a Regency Council, in which Anne of Austria and her brother-in-law became mere figureheads, the real authority lying with the old familiars of Richelieu, imbued with his spirit. But the queen-mother, remembering the expedient already employed by Mary de' Medicis, demanded that Parliament should revoke the last will and testament of the late king; the High Court, delighted at this opportunity of once more asserting, with the assent of the royal family, its sovereign political competence and in the meanwhile enraptured at the prospect of retaliation upon a prince who had allowed them to be humiliated by his minister, cancelled the Declaration. Anne was entrusted "*with the free, absolute and entire administration of the affairs of the realm,*" and Gaston became *lieutenant-general.* The queen was determined to allow him no authority and to free herself at the same time from the competition of the princes, such as Condé,[11] who proposed, under her shelter, to assume control over government and impose limits on Parliament, which without any loss of time was already proceeding to talk of State reformation in which it saw itself playing the part of promoter if not that of beneficiary-in-chief.

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[11] The family of Condé went back to Charles of Bourbon, Duke of Vendôme, who died in 1537, father of Antoine who was King of Navarre and whose son was Henry IV. The last of the five sons of this Charles was Louis, first Prince of Condé (1530-1569). Henry of Condé, now referred to, was his grandson. He was to die in 1646. He was a man without courage or capacity.

The queen-mother

Anne of Austria, debarred from participation in public business under Louis XIII, and till now restricted to equivocal intrigue, in other respects, ignorant, with little discernment or judgment, appeared supremely incapable of successfully accomplishing the heavy task which she had undertaken. But she had to her hand a man who might well supplement her deficiencies. This was an Italian, Mazarin, who had formerly entered the service of Richelieu and had been made cardinal—although no priest—by the grace of the powerful minister. He was supple, amiable and astute; an excellent diplomatist, but, as was proved later, only a mediocre statesman and an execrable financier. The minority of the king made him less free to deal with malcontents and rebels than Richelieu had been. They were always able to accuse him of thrusting or imposing his own decisions upon the infant king. But he was sure of the queen, who loved him with the heart of a woman whose prime of life was past and who had long suffered from continuous domestic unhappiness.

Mazarin

A. ***The real situation.***

Mazarin was not able to prevent the queen-regent from yielding favours and money to the greed of the great lords, with the result that they were merely encouraged to ask for more; but he had no difficulty in dealing with a cabal designed by them for his dismissal and replacement by themselves. It was known as the *Cabal of the Important* from the mysterious and consequential airs of the participators. Unfortunately, Richelieu's rule had made, as we know, many malcontents in all classes; the least pretext would thus suffice to unloose reaction, the result of which, of course, would be an endeavour to attaint those who preserved the detested tradition of the preceding reign. The princes and the Parliamentarians, particularly,

The Importants: reaction against Richelieu

were only waiting for an opportunity to retaliate for the stern repression to which they had been obliged to submit under the late king. Mazarin, therefore, compelled to meet the heavy expenses of the Thirty Years' War from regular resources which were quite insufficient, had recourse to extraordinary fiscal methods. They quickly gained him great unpopularity and, above all, gave the Sovereign Courts (*Great Council,*[12] *Parliament, Court of Accounts* and *Court of Aids*) the opportunity for which they were waiting.

How the Sovereign Courts obtained an advantage over Mazarin

Financial difficulties

The minister proceeded to create new posts solely in order to sell them; he augmented the taxes and, as a safeguard against the sometimes troublesome disturbances which attended their collection, he entrusted their administration to certain financiers who were called *traitants* or *partisans* and who simultaneously exploited the contributors and robbed the State, to which they advanced money at extortionate interest. The financial Courts were legitimately disturbed by this situation, and Parliament, which, by a mere play on words, considered itself analogous to the Parliament of England, invoked the "*fundamental laws of the kingdom*" and took the lead in opposition. In reality, it was quite incapable of playing the political part to which it aspired, its members having neither the political education nor the experience which were indispensable. Furthermore, its pretensions were really without juridical foundation; yet the government was far from being firm in its seat and might be practised upon with some prospect of success. The people of Paris were not long in taking interest in an opposition which gave them hopes of relief, and their support misled the magistrates into believing that they were expressing the real national opinion.

Pretensions of Parliament

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[12] *The Great Council,* separated from the *Council of State* under Charles VIII (1497), was then *a tribunal* whose jurisdiction, sufficiently various, extended particularly over cases concerned with ecclesiastical benefices, conflicts between different jurisdictions, contradictory decisions made by Parliaments. They also judged cases remitted to them by the Council of State.

The *Decree of Union*

On the 13th of May, 1648, in sequence to a fiscal edict which affected the Court of Accounts and the Court of Aids, the four Sovereign Courts formed a coalition and issued a *Decree of Union;* they then constituted a commission which met in the *Chamber of St. Louis,* to consider the whole question of State reform. Despite the menaces of the queen-regent, this commission drafted, in *twenty-seven articles,* a veritable Great Charter, which, had it ever been applied, would undoubtedly have cut short the career of absolutism (June). The confused character of this document does little credit to the method of its authors, whose intentions, however, it makes perfectly clear.

The *Declaration of the twenty-seven articles* (1648)

Its contents

Leaving on one side the merely topical articles of the Declaration, designed to prove that the State was ill ordered and its finance ill managed, our attention is arrested by four essential demands: 1. *Suppression of the Intendants,* active instruments of absolutist centralisation; 2. *Interdiction of the creation of new offices,* by which the authority of existing "officers" is impaired and diminished; 3. The right of the Sovereign Courts to *confirm all edicts and declarations relating to imposts and taxes,* with, on occasion, *the right to authorise and superintend their execution,* a transference to the Sovereign Courts of the fiscal authority of the king; 4. *The interdiction of all arbitrary detention;* every subject of the king, when placed under arrest, must be formally interrogated within twenty-four hours and brought as soon as possible before proper judges. It is obvious that the Parliamentarians had not forgotten the interests of their caste in these legislative provisions for the public good. But nevertheless their Declaration embodied principles which might be of substantial benefit to the liberty, dignity and general interests of Frenchmen.

The *day of Barricades,* 1648

The queen-regent after some weeks of resistance pretended to yield, but on the news of a decisive victory over the Spaniards at Lens, she promptly had the principal leaders of the Parliamentary opposition arrested, among them an old counsellor, Broussel, who was extremely popular on account of his modest way of life and his just repute for incorruptibility. At the news of his arrest (August 26) Paris rose as one man, her streets bristling with barricades. There was nothing to do but to give in and set Broussel free. The issue for royalty might have been grave, indeed, if the people, the bourgeoisie and the Parliamentarians had been capable of an understanding with one another, if they had had a plan of campaign and a leader. Mere outburst of sentiment, conducted by chance, as it was, it resulted only in an extremely humiliating fiasco for Anne of Austria. She decided to remain no longer within range of the mutineers and, on the first opportunity, left Paris for Saint-Germain with the young king during the night of January 5-6, 1649.

Flight of the court

B. *The Fronde*

The Parliamentary Fronde

With the king's departure, Parliament openly revolted, without, however, admitting that it was doing so. It was arming, it alleged, as a duty, to release the prince from the pernicious tutelage of Mazarin. It relied for support upon the Parisian bourgeoisie, but the populace, in constant agitation, gave it much anxiety, and certain great personages, the Duchess of Longueville and the Prince of Conti, sister and brother of the Prince of Condé,[13] who was still on the side of the court, the Duke of Bouillon and his brother Turenne, who were disposed to intrigue with Spain, still at war with France, gave them a self-interested and somewhat embarrassing support.

The royal army, commanded by Condé, was not long in making the Parisians tired of playing at soldiers; Parliament recognised that it had backed the wrong horse and its first President, Mathieu Molé, at bottom well disposed towards the government, negotiated and concluded the peace of Rueil

Peace of Rueil

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[13] This was the *Great Condé*, son of Henry of Condé, mentioned above. His victories at Rocroy and at Lens had made him one of the first soldiers of the time. His character was, in other respects, disorderly and violent and he was without political sense.

(March, 1649). This insurrection has been given the name of *Fronde* (Sling), with reference to a child's toy, dangerous to window-panes, which hurls stones in indiscriminate directions. The *Parliamentary Fronde* had now come to an end.

The Fronde of Princes (1650)

Unfortunately, the regent had seen fit to pay a high price for the submission of the rebel lords; a procedure which only encouraged them to reiterate and, at first, to increase their demands. Those who had remained loyal showed themselves no less greedy, and Condé, persuaded that he had been the saviour of the court and that nothing could now be refused him, seriously contemplated the ejection of Mazarin. All the princes compromised themselves so effectually that the minister ordered the arrest of the two brothers and the brother-in-law, Condé, Conti and Longueville (January, 1650). This stroke of force was the signal for the *Fronde of Princes*, promoted by the wives and friends of the three prisoners, who attempted to raise the provinces. This, though noisy and busy, was not of much consequence, except in Bordeaux which the king was obliged to retake in person.

The union of the two Frondes (1651)

The ill-faith of the cardinal ruined everything afresh. He broke the promises he had made to his allies, the coadjutor of the Archbishop of Paris, named Paul de Gondi, and an amazing feminine wire-puller, Madame de Chevreuse, who had persuaded the Parliament and Paris not to take part with the princes. Both turned upon him, excited the people of the capital, revivified parliamentary animosity, joined forces with the princesses, and made, with the other enemies of the cardinal, a coalition against him. This is known as the *Union of the two Frondes* (January, 1651).

Disagreement among the Frondeurs: their spirit

Mazarin took alarm and retired to the estates of the Elector of Cologne, having first had the princes set free. Events soon clearly demonstrated that if all went ill in the kingdom, this was not the fault of a "foreign minister" alone. The allies were divided by interests and enmities: the great lords detested the Sovereign Courts, who heartily reciprocated. In hard fact, with all the constant talk about restoration of the kingdom, there was now no real concern with reforms, though much with *private desires* and *caste interests*. Mazarin, from his exile, was dexterous in envenoming the quarrels and embittering the reciprocal resentments of these many agitators, all incapable of adopting any serious line of political conduct. If he had had the patience to let time do its work, his enemies would have destroyed one another, but he feared to lose the support of the queen and returned in December, 1651. His return, rekindling the hatreds of his own making against his person, gave fresh vigour and cohesion to the coalition.

Patriotism of the time

It must not be forgotten that at that time, patriotism was still an obscure and ill-defined sentiment. Among the people and the bourgeoisie it expressed itself in fear of foreign domination based on the recollection of the evils which such a visitation brought in its train; among the seigneurs it was confounded with loyalty and fidelity to the king, semi-feudal virtues in part counteracted by the desire to maintain what might be regarded as personal rights. A *prince of the blood*, such as Condé, surrounded by his loyal dependents and his own men, believed himself perfectly justified in taking up arms to assure what he regarded as his due position in the State, which the ill-intentioned were dissuading the king from allowing him. Such a man would seek support without remorse in England or in Spain.

The princes at Paris: their hesitations

A little war followed the return of Mazarin, and allowed the princes to enter Paris, but the population of the great town was by no means unanimous in their favour and they agreed ill among themselves, particularly Gaston of Orléans and Condé. The Parliamentarians had lost their popularity since, only too obviously, their agitation had had no definite good result, and most men of good sense held them responsible for the prevailing anarchy. In actual fact none of the rebels really knew what he desired or whither he was going, and each of their leaders was privily attempting to make terms with the Court. A disgraceful riot, in which several members of the municipality perished and which was believed to have been provoked by Condé (July 4, 1652), completed their discredit in Paris. Mazarin had the wisdom to withdraw himself again, thus promptly removing the last possible pretext for prolonging the rebellion.

The end of the Fronde (1653)

Condé left Paris and took refuge with the Spaniards. The king returned to his capital in October, 1652, and Mazarin in the following February. So tired was the country of the disorder of the Fronde that the cardinal was received with something like enthusiasm. The excitement gradually subsided and the rebellion died of inanition. The recapture of Bordeaux where a curious revolutionary government had been established (August 3, 1653) marks its end.

C. *Results of the whole affair: the state of France*

This pygmy war (*guerrette*), as a contemporary has called it, had, as a matter of fact, done huge harm to France. It was attended with copious pillage, since the small opposing armies, both equally ill-paid, had lived on the country. Above all, it had served as a pretext for the entry into the kingdom of troops whom the end of the Thirty Years' War had left without employment in Germany and who ravaged the North and East of the country. *Atrocious misery* was thus the sequel of the Fronde, famine and pestilence descended together upon the poor. The praiseworthy efforts of St. Vincent de Paul could do little against such distress. It was this as much as the general appreciation of the impotence and futility of the Frondeurs which determined the sudden abandonment of all resistance. Mazarin now met with none but flatterers and humble servants on all sides; the greatest lords were assiduous to marry his nieces. France in her imperative need for tranquillity and order allowed herself to drift into slavery, placing all her hopes in the authority of the king.

General lassitude. The rush towards servitude

Parliament itself, after some resistance, submitted like others and resigned itself to servitude. Bossuet was well justified in saying that the Fronde had been "*like the travail of France before the birth of the miraculous reign of Louis.*"

The two Frances

In sober truth, it had been a birth in pain and tears, a strain, whose effect would be felt for long afterwards. In 1661, at the death of Mazarin, there were, in reality, *two Frances:* one visible to all eyes, elegant, polished, brilliant, well launched on an artistic and literary evolution, the precursor of the *Great Century;* and the other, out of sight, a France of seigneurs, dull and debased, gross and brutish petty squires, a miserable and bestialised people, which can only be seen just as it was through the eyes of Vincent de Paul and Callot—a France, in fact, which will be unable to sustain the effort demanded of it by Louis XIV, and which needs, above all things, not *glory*, but peace, thrift and good management of all kinds.

Conclusion

But Mazarin had at least achieved decisive results. The great nobles are vanquished and finally tamed; the Parliamentarians have been reduced for a long time to come to uncomplaining obedience; the Protestants, overwhelmed by Richelieu, have not stirred during the Fronde: politically, they are no longer of any account. The king is absolute master, in fact, as in law. Undoubtedly, during the period of trouble and even after it, revolutionary ideas have been expressed in occasional pamphlets, sometimes very violent in tone, and some have even spoken of a republic; but nothing came of their audacities. And even the chief opinion which dominated and retained its hold upon agitators and malcontents during the minority of Louis XIV—namely, that the king should govern by himself and in no case delegate the control of the State to a ministerial tyrant, such as Richelieu, an opinion which in no sense was in favour of weakening the theoretical absolutism of the prince—had not prevailed. Mazarin had won a great victory, which was to permit the organisation of a centralised royal administration and the installation of a truly despotic monarchy; he had made it an accepted principle that every *agent of the king to whom his authority was delegated must be obeyed like the king himself.*

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CHAPTER XXI

THE DESPOTISM OF LOUIS XIV

The drawbacks of despotism

IT was a great misfortune for France and the monarchy that every means of resisting royal absolutism and every desire to do so should have disappeared towards 1661. The evolution of royalty, which might have proceeded in closer and closer adaptation to the needs of the country, was cut short and crystallised into a practical *deification of the king*. And since, in fact, *the uncontrolled authority* of the prince cannot possibly do all that is needed, it gives less than it takes away, and any government which it provides has inevitably many shortcomings; further, by supplanting every other principle on which public action can be based, *it rapidly vitiates its own administration and transforms it into a mere exploitation of the subjects for the benefit of the monarch.*

The abettors of the king

The character and the political theories of Louis XIV largely contributed to this disastrous result; but this character assumed its visible shape under the influence of a definite environment. These theories did not spring spontaneously to birth in the spirit of the young king; they are the result of impressions made on him by his surroundings. When Bossuet, preaching before him in the Lent of 1662, said, "*Il se remue pour votre Majesté quelque chose d'illustre et de grand et qui passe la destinée des rois vos prédécesseurs*" (*There broods over your Majesty something illustrious and great, foreshadowing a destiny above that of the kings your predecessors*), he expressed a prevalent opinion. It was with the complicity of his own subjects that Louis XIV developed his despotic egotism. Neither they nor he understood from the start the danger they were running.

THE DESPOTISM OF LOUIS XIV

I

Louis XIV: the man and the king

A. *The man.*

Louis in 1661. His portrait

At the death of Mazarin the king was twenty-two, and was commonly considered the handsomest man in his kingdom. It was said at court that only the poet Racine could compare with him. In other words, he fulfilled the ideal of royal beauty, formed by his contemporaries. Though he was but of moderate stature, he had a perfect nobility and majesty of deportment, so natural as never to seem in the least affected. Easy and gracious, with the most courteous manners in the world, he exercised an extraordinary attraction when he cared to trouble himself so far. Saint-Simon,[1] who had no affection for him, nevertheless praises his fine manners and his perfect politeness. His subjects had a genuine admiration for him. "*The respect aroused by his presence, no matter where or when,*" writes Saint-Simon, "*imposed silence and almost terror on all.*" Even in old age and depression he never lost his grand air.

His intelligence and culture

His mind without being "*below mediocrity,*" as the redoubtable memorialist alleges, was ordinary and above all *passive*, but "*capable of forming itself,*" being well able both to attend and to reflect. It was, in other respects, ill-served by a most inadequate education, conducted without order or method during the Fronde, which Mazarin made no effort to remedy effectively, in so far as essentially political knowledge was concerned, until the last years of his life. Louis XIV in compensation for these insufficiencies had indeed the precious gift of *knowing how to be silent, and how to listen,* and another, even rarer among absolute monarchs: he could tolerate ability in those about him and turn it to his own use and profit.

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[1] Son of a favourite of Louis XIII, the Duke of Saint-Simon was born in 1675; he, therefore, only knew Louis XIV personally in that king's maturity and old age. He had no affection for him, both because he considered that his own talents were insufficiently recognised by the king and because he had an aversion for a government which gave its confidence only to people of no birth. He relieves his resentment by secretly writing *Mémoires,* prodigiously vivacious, but partial and often rancorous.

His character

His character was headstrong and his temper in all probability violent, but he could keep it under control; a perfect self-mastery seemed to him essential to his dignity, and Saint-Simon assures us that he did not lose his self-control "*more than ten times in the whole of his life*"; that is to say, he did not allow himself to be visibly angered more than ten times. He was endowed with a certain instinct for right, justice and equity which he did not always follow, but never completely lost. His politeness, too, tempered and controlled his keen susceptibilities, but it unfortunately fostered a tendency to dissimulation, a fault to which he was by nature only too prone, and this dissimulation was accompanied by a tendency to be vindictive which led him at times to ill-feeling and ill-dealing. His *pride* was unbounded, such that "*but for the fear of the devil which God never took from him, however disturbed he might be, he would have caused himself to be worshipped.*" His pride never pardoned an offense, and to offend him was easy.

The effects of flattery upon him

It is possible that his good will, his diligence, certain qualities of prudence and moderation, his basic benevolence, if not real generosity—an assortment, in fact, of inconspicuous but by no means negligible virtues—might, after some years of experience of life, if each reinforced the other, have made him a type of much that a king should be, had not all been ruined by flattery. Unfortunately Louis XIV was the prey "*of flattery so egregious as to deify him in the very heart of Christianity.*" During his whole life he drank deep of this deadly poison. It gave him extreme pleasure and cost him his sense of reality. Thus he came to believe himself of a different kind and of a different clay from other men, to find it both natural and necessary that all men and everything should be sacrificed to him. His egotism developed into a kind of unconscious ferocity and his *Ego*, his "*Moi*," became a monstrosity. The interested and ingenious servility of courtiers, the crowd of adulators constantly pressing about him, were more responsible than himself for this disastrous distortion of his judgment.

His religion

He was extremely devout, or at least he became so when his early youthful fires had waned. He believed himself in all respects a good Christian. In reality he neither professed nor comprehended any but a religion of outward show, compounded of habit, ceremony, superstition and "*fear of the devil.*" It was impotent either to make him moral or repress his inordinate sensuality. His private life was a scandal up to the threshold of middle age and he paraded his irregularities before the world with a sedate absence of all shame, apparently in the belief that he was privileged by Heaven and need not concern himself with the code that must rule the rest of the world. Not only did he live openly in adultery, but he had the assurance to give his bastards the rank of princes of the blood. It is probable that the eminent preachers whose office it was, every Lent, to remind him of the Christian virtues and of repentance for sin, sometimes found themselves in an embarrassing position. The warnings and the stern rebukes, to which he had to listen from some among them, fell on deaf ears till he had grown old, or at least was aging after 1681.

He owed the dignity of the latter part of his life, in all probability, to Madame de Maintenon.[2] It was she who brought him and the queen again together in 1681, and after the death of the latter, in 1683, she was secretly married to the king, probably in January, 1684. Thenceforward he was a faithful husband and grew steadily more absorbed in religious devotion. On his death-bed he asked pardon from the bystanders for the scandals occasioned by his transgressions.

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[2] Françoise d'Aubigné, who became Marquise de Maintenon, was the widow of the poet Scarron. Louis XIV made her acquaintance at Madame de Montespan's, whose adulterine children she brought up.

B. *The king*

His political theories. Their origin

His political theories, which he took the trouble to embody by his own hand in writing for the instruction of his son, were in keeping with the education which had persuaded him that for him there was no law but his own will, and no control but that of God. One of his childish copybook headings, which has been preserved, is in these words, "*Homage is due to kings, they do everything that pleases them.*" His youth was spent in hearing this reiterated by all about him, and the Fronde itself helped to convince him that all hung attendant on the king's will.

Contemporary idea of royalty

That kings were "*instituted by God,*" held their sceptre from Him alone, need render no account of their acts but to Him alone, was the complete conviction of his contemporaries as of himself and the few bold spirits, who still recalled the political doctrines of the jurists of the Renaissance and their chimeras concerning *Organised Monarchy*—that is to say, monarchy controlled and limited—were careful after the end of the troubles to raise no voice in France. The work of Bossuet,[3] *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Ecriture sainte*, has been commonly considered as the classical presentation of the doctrine of the divine right of kings. Its chief merit was the exposition of this doctrine in precise propositions and in a style of great magnificence. Fundamentally it added nothing essential to what had been said again and again for forty or fifty years by every political theorist of royalty. Is it not curious to hear on the lips of Parliamentarians formulas which no servility could surpass, taken as a matter of course as the expression of received opinion?—the king is "*a visible divinity*" or "*a divine image of the divinity . . . , an august law-giver, who with one hand has access to the laws in the breast of God himself, and with the other communicates the gathered treasure through us to his people.*"

Right divine as regarded by Louis XIV

Louis XIV was thus naturally led to believe himself of a

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[3] Composed about 1677, published in 1709.

"*station above that of other men.*" He saw himself as "*standing in the place of God*" and as "*sharing in his knowledge as well as in his authority.*" He persuaded himself that for a man of his rank to be under "*the necessity of receiving the law from his people*" was the "*greatest calamity*" into which he could fall, that every man who was his "*born subject*" must "*blindly obey,*" and that "*however bad*" a prince might be, revolt against him was "*always infinitely criminal,*" because a prince could be judged only by God. These convictions were held by him to be clearly established both by direct evidence and by the sovereign strength of revelation.

Obligations of the *trade of king*

However, he did not, for a moment, imagine that divine favour had raised him to the throne merely to indulge himself with a life of ease and material satisfaction. He believed thoroughly that the *interest of the State must come first* and that his own duty was clear: he must never "*reproach himself in any important matter with having done less than his best.*" It was borne in upon him that the "*trade*" he practised was one which exacted abnegation and forgetfulness of self. "*The trade of king,*" he wrote, "*is great, noble and delightful when the workman can feel that he has acquitted himself worthily in all his undertakings, but it does not exempt him from pain, fatigue and anxiety.*" Above all, it exacts continual labour: "*it is by this he reigns, for this he reigns, and it were ingratitude and insolence towards God, injustice and tyranny towards men to desire the one without the other.*"

Labour obligatory

How Louis XIV laboured

Louis XIV was indeed a life-long labourer; that is to say, he devoted several hours a day to audiences with his ministers and councils, he made decisions, he really believed that he himself transacted all the chief business of the State, though in this he was not free from illusions; neither in quantity nor in quality was his work all that he believed it to be. Nevertheless he did his best according to the measure of his ability and was persuaded that he was the inspirer of his ministers.

The confusion between State and King

There is certainly some grandeur in this conception which shows the sovereign, rising superior to human frailty, to all individual interests and to his own inclinations, bending his mind and will to the sole service of his State. Unfortunately Louis XIV thought that "*when one has the State in view one works for oneself*" and he held that *the nation* had no embodiment in France, save as it might express itself solely "*in the person of the king.*" Thus *it was easy for him to confuse the State with his person, and the public service with worship of himself.*

The *idolatry* for him of his contemporaries

A strange phenomenon indeed is the feeling displayed at this time towards the monarch, professed as it is by men in whom a genuine revival of faith has engendered an energetic Catholicism and amounting as it does to a kind of *idolatry*. Louis XIV had merely to make a gesture to inaugurate a cult. Did not, in 1686, the Marshal of La Feuillade go so far as to have lighted lanterns placed at night about the prince's statue on the Place des Victoires at Paris? Other acts of like servility are met with; we feel that more than one of those courtiers to whom the king's countenance was "*felicity complete,*" as La Bruyère puts it, tended to accept as truth the ejaculation of Bossuet, "*O kings, ye are gods*"*!* And this devotional sentiment and this religious respect undoubtedly are a better explanation than the universal lassitude which followed the Fronde, of the abasement of character and the abdication of all will in face of the king.

II

Framework of the royal life.
A. *His residences.*
Versailles

Louis XIV was not fond of Paris, associated as it was with the galling and humiliating memories of past revolts; he disliked Saint-Germain because, it was said, he could see from its terrace the towers of the abbey of Saint-Denis which reminded him disagreeably of death. He had spent, too, some unhappy days in the great chill palace at the beginning of 1649. Fontainebleau, again, was too far from the capital; the king determined to create a structure worthy of the majesty it was to house and to whose measure it was to be made, and he proceeded to the building of the château of Versailles, after having first thought of enlarging the Louvre, where he undertook great works in 1666-1680.

Building of the château

In the woods of Versailles Louis XIII had built a small château between 1624 and 1626. This was a kind of hunting-box in no very good position, "*a favourite without merit*," said Saint-Simon. It seemed probable that Louis XIV, charmed by the magnificent dwelling that his minister Fouquet had built at Vaux-le-Vicomte,[4] wished to possess one like it, but worthy of its greater occupant. The work began in 1661. Little by little the king became more and more interested, despite the resistance of Colbert, who saw a bottomless pit of expense opening before him. In 1668, what may be called the *first Versailles* was finished. There was as yet no idea of a permanent establishment for the court. It was merely to be a place for occasional visits, but in the same year, 1668, the king commanded *Le Vau* to prepare a plan for new extensions which afterwards became the starting-point of the *second Versailles*, from which *Mansart*, after the death of Le Vau, built the huge palace which still stands. Louis took up his abode there in 1682, before it was finished. He took prodigious interest in its construction, and busied himself much about it. Up to the end of the reign, the palace was constantly improved.

The installation

The many difficulties which had to be surmounted to realise his desire of turning a tiny village into a town, and bidding a sumptuous palace to emerge out of brake and morass, gave him the divine satisfaction of feeling that he had overcome and tamed nature herself; every resource of every art was set to work, the maximum of majesty and opulence conceivable by the men of the time was to be attained.

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[4] In the present department of Seine-and-Marne, arrondissement and canton of Melun.

Trianon

For occasional escape from the crowds which thronged about him at Versailles, the king built the château of Trianon at the end of the park (1687). It was not long before he realised that this residence was too close a neighbour to the other. He then returned to his idea of a country house and carried away, as always, by his pride and delight in the conquest of nature, he chose Marly, a marshy valley with no view, at the back of a hill, situated on the left bank of the Seine, "*a haunt of snakes and carrion birds, toads and frogs*," says Saint-Simon, somewhat unkindly. Mansart accomplished the miracle demanded of him (1693) and made Marly a charming place of abode. There the king came to pass a week or two from time to time, in the company of a very small group of guests. There he lived more simply than at Versailles and took a holiday from the ceremonial restraints which he ordinarily imposed upon himself.

Marly

B. *His environment*

The court

His habitual life was that of the court, carrying on the tradition of Francis I and developing it. He gathered about him deliberately as distinguished a retinue as possible; every noble, in fact, who claimed to count for anything in the kingdom. All did not take up their permanent residence about him, but they would remain for a longer or shorter time after being "presented" to the king. Those who thought that they might grant themselves a dispensation from this duty could hope for nothing from his favour in a time when, except from his favour, no man could get anything. Any domestic post entailing proximity to the person of the prince became the supreme ambition of all. These posts were many, the royal service being of infinite complexity. The court is, for the great folk and the king himself, "*the whole of France*" (a saying of Madame de Sévigné), a serious state of affairs, for the court is a factitious world and too often makes the king blind to the real one.

Transformations in the life of the court

The life of the court altered in character during the reign. Brilliant, gay, mad for festivity and pleasure, during the youth of the king and up till 1683, after that date it grew more and more melancholy and morose. The religion of Louis XIV, as age came over him, became both inquisitorial and officious. He was always reprimanding or moralising. He insisted on a rigid gravity of bearing among his entourage, which became at once a way of flattering the king and a cloak for the worst vices. In his last years, tedium reigns supreme over the court. Its people enact assumed parts watched by the suspicious eyes of the old king, whose spies insinuate themselves everywhere.

Aspect and spirit of the court

For the rest, even in the time of its greatest and most dazzling splendour, the court, an assemblage of the idle and the useless, is an abode of ill fame. Its thronging crowds, under their fine clothes and fair manners, are for the most part both gross and lax; any fastidious delicacy of moral feeling is beyond them. Outwardly fair, it is all frontage, like the palace of Versailles, gorgeous and uncomfortable, malodorous and icy cold, where everything had been sacrificed to the state apartment and the first floor. The king himself carried under his leonine periwig an ill-cared-for head, and an ill-washed skin under his lace and fine linen.

Etiquette and the king's life of *parade*

But at court one thing never alters, *etiquette:* it sets the time for every detail of official life, particularly the public life of the king, which drones on, a kind of liturgy, ceremonious, monotonous and chill. The king's rising, his mass, his repasts, his promenade, his going to bed, are all so many religious services in which his majesty is worshipped by his highest subjects as he condescends to present his person for their veneration. From morning till night, the day of Louis XIV was nothing but a ceremonial parade, interrupted only by his official meetings with his ministers or at first by occasional escapades, though these he denied himself as he grew older. He thought this continual dramatic representation essential to his prestige, and considered it as an affirmation of his semi-

All centres about his person

divine position above mankind. He had chosen as his own the proudest possible emblem, *the sun*, which lights, warms and dazzles the earth, and whose many symbols, collected from all mythologies, filled his abodes. As he asserted that everything in his kingdom was his, even the private possessions of his subjects, to whom their "use" was allowed only by his "*grâce singulière*," so he considered that every exercise of genius or talent should be consecrated to him or contribute to his glory. He deemed it natural and in consonance with his dignity to encourage arts and letters by his generosity, holding, however, that it was their first duty to do him service. He forced on orators as on artists, on Racine as on Bossuet, on Lebrun as on Lulli, allowing no deviation, his imperious taste for the majestic and the grandiose; the royal exigencies might shackle and enfeeble their highest gifts, but their works had to take their place and play their part in the fashioning of the resplendent frame within which Louis XIV moved and had his being. One cannot but be surprised that Molière, not only that Molière of the fairy tales, of the *Princesse d'Élide*, or of the *Amants magnifiques*, not even he of the "great comedies" of *Tartuffe* or of the *Misanthrope*, but he of the farces, of *Georges Dandin*, of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* or the *Malade Imaginaire*, broke down his solemnity and made him laugh; it must have been at a moment when genius took youth by surprise. Never had history seen so complete an absorption in one man of all the living forces, all the tendencies and almost all the thought of a country, never had human servility descended so low, as in the forms permitted by the manners of this period. Neither the king nor his subjects seemed conscious of this moral abasement.

III

The government.

Louis XIV always claimed to govern by himself; the examples of his father dominated by Richelieu, and of his mother

A. *The rôle of the king.* The pretension of Louis XIV to personal government

led by Mazarin, the memories of his youth, which were certainly not unmixed so far as his associations and personal relations with the late cardinal were concerned, had taught him a salutary lesson. He was determined that another should never be "*king in function*" while he was but king in name. Thus he decided to do without a prime minister and entrusted the preparation and the execution of business only to *commis* (clerks). Nor did he ever make of any man a favourite, or at any rate he allowed no one with whom he formed a friendship to exercise any influence whatever in State affairs any more than he allowed his mistresses to do so.

His share of illusion

Saint-Simon alleges that in reality he was led by his ministers, even the least able among them, and that he was master only in his own imagination. There is undoubtedly some truth in this view, but it should not be unreservedly accepted. The Fronde had taught him suspicion of men; he knew that they might deceive him and he was always on his guard. Those of his *commis* who really influenced him successfully were those who, as students of human nature, had the address to persuade him that the ideas and the resolutions which he owed to their suggestion were originated by himself. Le Tellier, father of Louvois, relates that of twenty agenda submitted by himself to a Council meeting there was always one which the king returned for examination after refusing the proposed solution, but it was impossible to know beforehand which one it would be. Louis XIV said *No* to show that he was master and in a position to do so, not because he had come to any opinion of his own upon the case in question. As he could not possibly know or examine everything for himself, it may be considered as certain that his ministers sometimes duped him, that they wielded more power than he wished, but this was only achieved surreptitiously and by running a risk from the authority which hung over them, always ready to strike. The perfidious and tenacious rancour which the king displayed towards Fouquet, his superintendent of finance, after his disgrace and arrest, helps us to realise to what lengths he could go when he felt certain that he had been deceived.

Improvement rather than innovation

He was not a man to think of great innovations in matters of government or even to realise that they might be necessary. On the other hand, he showed himself capable of approving improvements, more or less considerable, on the tradition which he received from the hands of Mazarin, provided that they seemed likely to advance his power or add lustre to his name.

B. *The central government.*
1. The ministers

During his reign the organisation of central government on the lines laid down by Francis I was completed. His ministers were six: *the Chancellor*, for justice; *the Controller-General of Finance*—the title of *superintendent* was thus altered, as being unacceptable to the king—*the four Secretaries of State:* of the *King's Household*, of *Foreign Affairs*, of *War* and of the *Navy*. But it must not be assumed that the apparent precision of their titles implied a clear and invariable ascription of duties among these four last functionaries. The limits of their respective jurisdictions are always giving rise to doubt, dispute and transpositions between them. The confusion is still further increased by the fact that each retains the general administration of one of the four sections into which the kingdom is still divided; each minister has a numerous staff, assigned to different *bureaux*. In these, current business is considered and carried on by the officials who form their staff, and are soon to become an important factor in the State. *The reign of the bureaucracy is beginning.*

2. The Councils

The traditional practice of the French monarchy was to surround itself with competent advisers. These came to form what were practically government Councils. Under Louis XIV the tendency to specialisation, already frequently mentioned, has reached a definite result; we see four regular and largely specialised *Councils* now at work. The *Council* "par excellence," called also the *High Council*, examines all great ques-

The High Council

tions of policy and government, as does our Council of Ministers today. Its numbers do not exceed four or five persons, including the king. They are entitled *Ministers of State.* The *Council of Despatches* has cognisance of all business affecting the interior administrative life of the kingdom. It conducts, with the four Secretaries of State as intermediaries, correspondence with the intendants. It consists of not more than a dozen or so members and is presided over by the king: it includes the dauphin, the Ministers of State, the Chancellor, the Controller-General of Finance and the Secretaries of State. The *Council of Finance* dealt with the assessment and distribution of direct taxes, conducted negotiations with the financiers and examined all that the financial administration thought fit to submit to it. The king sat as its president twice a week.

The Council of Despatches

The Council of Finance

The *Privy Council* or *Council of Parties* was essentially, like our present Council of State, a *superior* court; that is to say all the administrative difficulties, conflicts as to jurisdiction, besides a number of purely judicial affairs that the king consigned to it, came within its province which was both extremely vague and extensive. It consisted of thirty members assisted by eighty-eight *Masters of Requests*, who examined and reported upon cases. These masters paid high prices [5] for their posts, since their work prepared them for that of higher administration and the king chose his provincial *Intendants* from among them. The Privy Council was presided over by the Chancellor, the king rarely attending, though its business was conducted in his name as though he himself were present.

The Privy Council

This organisation of the central government of Louis XIV is undoubtedly still far from perfection. It still fails in the distinct differentiation between functions which we know to be

Progress indicated by this organisation

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[5] The *official* price under Louis XIV was between 150,000 and 200,000 livres, but as these posts, under the *Paulette,* remained the family property of their buyers, they sold actually for much higher sums than the official price.

necessary to the smooth working of a political machine. It is nevertheless a great advance on its predecessor though it runs on similar lines. The *Duke of Beauvilliers*, who was head of the Council of Finance and afterwards Minister of State, was almost the only exception to the rule that no authentic noble had part or portion in this central government; no prince of the blood except the dauphin had even the right to membership of any of the four Councils. This despotism meant, as Saint-Simon said, "*the reign of the long robe*" in all things. The titles of nobility borne by many among these confidential men or ministers of the king should not mislead us as to their origin; they are bourgeois or they come from the ranks of the *officers* of the robe. Ennoblement was the reward for their services.[6]

3. The personnel of government

C. *The provincial government*

1. The provinces

The provincial government likewise becomes better defined; the provinces are now fixed areas, each has its governor, a noble and a swordsman, well paid and much looked up to, but in reality now no more than a figurehead, indeed so much so that except on special ceremonial occasions the majority of these great personages dispense with residence in their "government." The real authority is in the hands of the *Intendant*. As the experiment attempted by Richelieu proved successful, it was continued by Mazarin and completed by Louis XIV. In his reign the kingdom was divided into financial districts, known as *Généralités*[7] or *Intendances*, of which there were thirty-one in 1700. Their limits did not coincide with those of the provinces in which they were established.

2. The *Généralités* or *Intendances*

The Intendants

The *Intendant*, his appointment being decided by the Council of the Parties, was chosen by the king, under whose control he remained. He started his career in an intendantship of small importance and his advancement depended on his zeal and success in the "*execution of the orders of his Majesty.*" His powers may be described as extending over the whole provincial administration and his work as comprising all duties such as now fall to the heads of the various services in a modern department. Taxes, police, public works, commerce, industry, religious matters, recruiting, supervision and control of the courts of justice and of the administrators of all ranks, the judgment of many contentious or even criminal cases and the selection of those chosen for submission to the king; his work and his authority both covered an immense field.

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[6] An ordinance of 1704 confers hereditary nobility on all officials of the *Superior Courts* (ancient *Sovereign Courts*) and of the Parliaments after twenty years of membership.

[7] This term *généralité* comes from the fact that finances of this district were at first administered by a *bureau of Treasurers-General of France.*

Disparities between the provinces

Louis XIV would naturally wish to abolish such *Provincial States* as still survived, many of which did, in fact, disappear during his reign, for instance, those of Auvergne, Normandy, Quercy and others. If he left some as they were (Brittany, Flanders, Artois, Burgundy, Provence, Languedoc) this would be because they gave him no trouble and because he had probably no intention of abolishing wholesale all the institutions of the past still extant in the provinces. He allowed various anomalies in local administrative usage to continue, and left uncorrected defects of organisation, highly detrimental to those who came under them. They could be justified by established custom and the king seems to have been little concerned with them, being, as he always was, supremely preoccupied with securing two things from his people: *passive obedience and money.*

Character of the government

The government is one which settles all questions in secret. It is absolutely uncontrolled. The *nobility* are no longer a separate body, and politically they count for nothing; to the prince they are "*mere people,*" says Saint-Simon. The *Assembly of the clergy,* held at regular intervals, deals only with its own affairs, except that it is attempting to secure the abolition of the Edict of Nantes. All ecclesiastical appointments are in the hands of the king. The *States-General* are now altogether out of the field. Their name alone was sufficient to set Louis XIV beside himself. There was now not even an Assembly of

Notables. The *Parliament*, deprived of all right of remonstrance, could now do no more than register the edicts of the king without comment. As to the *subjects*, they had merely to take their orders. Discussion is considered as revolt and as a kind of sacrilege. It will be only towards the end of the reign that *opposition*, born from the misery of the country and from the failures of the king, will venture to find a home in men's minds and occasionally an outward expression. Not even a genius could have succeeded in realising the immeasurable pretensions of this appalling despotism; and Louis XIV was no genius.

IV

The administration

Its principles

The administration of the kingdom is entirely directed for the service and benefit of the king, against which no consideration whatever can prevail. The care, which it outwardly devotes to the public interest, is no more than a way of promoting the king's. If the subjects are well off and contented they will be able to pay better and more. Although men of all ranks are merely "people" before the king, equally subjected to his will, in practice the administration takes account of the *social inequalities* that the founders of the French monarchy had never attempted to abolish, which were so unfortunately confirmed by the States-General of 1614 and which were now maintained by Louis XIV. It seems probable that no idea that they were unjust or detrimental to the State ever entered his head; all prescription was in their favour. His absolutism, in fact, heavy as it was upon all men, was particularly severe upon the *small folk*, on whose shoulders it laid the greater portion of public expenditure.

Social inequalities

A. *The finances.* Burden of the taxes on the lesser folk

In principle, they are the sole bearers of the direct impost (*la taille*,[8] a tax on real property), besides most of those which are indirect, the chief of which are *aids*, diverse taxes upon merchandise of prime necessity and common consumption and *gabelle*, a tax upon salt. These imposts are raised in a way which makes them particularly difficult to bear. The State farms them out to private companies which can appeal to public force for support; they greatly abuse the power thus given them to bring pressure upon the defenceless tax-payers. In those times it was no honour to a man to say that he was in the *Farms* or *Parties*; this last word designating the tenders made to the State by financiers in relation to the adjudication of taxes. From this deplorable system the peasants were the sufferers in chief.

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[8] It is supposed that this impost (originally a feudal due, exacted from the peasants by the seigneur: the villain-tax) takes its name from the *taille* or

The financial expedients

After the death of Colbert (1683), who had done his best to restrain the insane extravagance of the king, the impoverishment of the country proceeded apace, assisted by the exigencies of an expensive foreign policy. The returns from the ordinary taxes then diminished as the need of the royal treasury for money grew greater. The government had recourse to various expedients, not altogether honourable, which furthermore were far from fulfilling expectation. The verses of Boileau are well known (*Satire* III).

D'où vous vient aujourd'hui cet air sombre et sévère,	Why do you look so sombre and severe today,
Et ce visage enfin plus pâle qu'un rentier	With a face indeed paler than a rentier's
A l'aspect d'un édit qui supprime un quartier?	At the appearance of an edict which abrogates a quarter?

A *quartier* of the *rentes* covers a *trimestre*, period of three months; to abrogate it was a method of raising a special tax on the creditors of the State. The creation of useless and sometimes ridiculous posts is an indirect method of establishing new taxes, as the newly created officials will not fail to

tally or stick, on which the first collectors cut notches, to record their receipts. This practice is still in use among bakers in some country districts to keep an account of the loaves which they sell on credit. The seller and the buyer each have a *taille* (tally).

reimburse themselves from the pockets of the public; thus we find controllers appointed for faggots, fresh butter, oysters and the like, without mentioning *conseillers semestres* (semestrial councillors) who, sitting in their courts for six months only, enable the State to double the number of those functionaries.

The general taxes: the *poll tax* and *tenth*

The fiscal necessities became so great that even a restriction in the number of the *privileged* had to be accepted. The poll-tax, established in 1695, was to be paid by all Frenchmen without distinction in proportion to their income; only the poorest were exempted. As a matter of fact the privileged, by diverse expedients, for instance, by paying a composition by which they escaped on good terms—as was done by the Assembly of the Clergy—or by obtaining the appointment of special receivers, materially decreased their obligations. This was similarly the case with another tax upon income, the *tenth*, superimposed in 1710, upon all contributions and upon all subjects.

Attitude of the government towards the financial distress

The government was not unaware of the defects in its fiscal system and could easily realise the disastrous results to which they must lead, but it seems to have been only concerned to fill the treasury by no matter what means, and to have considered inevitable, if not natural, evils for which it had neither leisure nor will to devise adequate remedies. Those which were suggested to it from without, for instance by *Vauban* beginning in 1695 and by *Boisguillebert* starting from 1699,[9] left it indifferent or brought more or less disagreeable consequences upon the heads of their authors.

B. *Justice.* The courts

Justice remained in the hands of the old local jurisdictions, over which were the *Présidiaux*, which went back to Henry II (over them again were the *Parliaments*, then about twelve in number) but its orderly working is disturbed by the privileges of the clergy, who have their own tribunals, and of the nobles, who still often enjoy the abusive right to be judged only by the Parliament of Paris; above all, it is impaired by the *right of evocation* retained by the king. He, being theoretically supreme judge and the fountain-head of all justice, is able, when he thinks fit, to transfer any case from its regular judges and bring it before the *Council of Parties*. These exceptions and privileges are detrimental to the proper working of one of the essential functions of the State.

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[9] We shall meet again with Vauban and his *Dîme Royale* (Royal Tenth) which brought him into disgrace with the king. Boisguillebert, an economist, composed a *Détail de la France* (Survey of France) which he endeavoured to have considered by the minister Pontchartrain, who treated it as nonsense, and by Chamillart, who perused it with some interest, but was tired by his persistence which at times was insulting, and dismissed him to exile in Auvergne.

The right of the king

The diversity of laws and customs had similar effects. It is impossible to find a way through their inextricable confusion. A methodical synopsis would have been indispensable. Colbert thought of having one made and of drafting a kind of civil code, but his plans came to nothing.

Confusion of the law

The criminal procedure remains barbarous and the penalties are harsh in the extreme. When the king wants oarsmen for his galleys, conviction for any petty crime is enough to send a man to the benches. Generally speaking, the law takes no thought for the moral improvement of delinquents; its one aim is to induce terror by extreme severity. Here as elsewhere the government follows its most immediate interest, regardless of equity, of the needs of its subjects, or of the progress of manners, which are much milder than those of the Middle Ages though its spirit still survives in the practice of torture.

Its spirit

The administration of Louis XIV is in close correspondence with the principles and intentions of the government for which it acts. Rigorous, exacting, and generally exact, it confounds the service of the king with the good of the State, and for the good of the State it deliberately sacrifices individual interests, even those which most call for respect. It is, in fact, an instrument of despotism and not in the least an organism established and set to work for the good of the nation.

The character of the administration

V

Its practical application: Difference between periods

We see that the actual working of the despotic machine differs in the various periods of the reign. It should be noted that Louis XIV was, in common opinion, inseparable from the frame of Versailles, though at the very moment when he definitely established himself in his new dwelling there were clear signs that France was sinking in exhaustion under the yoke. He had demanded from her a fiscal effort, which could not be long within her power, but which she had hitherto made, and to which the brilliancy of the first part of the reign was due.

Good and less good ministers

It is indeed in the first half of the reign that the most able servants of the king are found and that most of their activity occurs: in the interests of the State, they did their best to control extravagant expenditure and moderate the exploitation of the people. Those who replaced them in public business let things take their course either through mere incapacity, since they were not always well chosen by the king, or through want of power, since the moment had come when no human will could possibly avert disaster, or through subservience and since it would be long before the king would be resigned frankly to face the appalling truth.

Disadvantages at the start

It must not be forgotten that the "*miraculous reign of Louis*" begins in the poverty-stricken time of the Fronde, and that the interest of France in 1661, properly understood, demanded, above all things, a prudent and thrifty government; her back was too weak to carry for long one which was otherwise. If the king, himself too ill-informed, too enamoured of festivities and high-flown deeds, too feverish in his pursuit of glory and too proud, had no means of properly appreciating the evidence and conducting himself accordingly, one man at least perceived it and did his best to grapple with it. This is *Jean Baptiste Colbert*, the greatest minister of the reign (1619-1683).

A. *Colbert.*

His origin and his beginnings

He was the son of a cloth merchant of Rheims, whose father had obtained a footing in the administration by the purchase of the post of *Secretary of the King*, which attached him to the royal *Chancellory.* He himself first entered the service of Le Tellier, Secretary of State for War under Mazarin, and afterwards that of the cardinal himself. He distinguished himself in different appointments, notably in that of intendant of the personal fortune of the minister, which was more extensive than well acquired, and his dying master warmly recommended him to Louis XIV. From 1651 onwards he held posts in the administration of finances. He raised his fortune on the ruins of that of the Superintendant, Fouquet. It was he who denounced to the king the irregularities, abuses and malversations of the financier; it was he who prosecuted the man—whose principal error had been, beyond all doubt, an unseasonable adherence to the methods of Mazarin—with a perspicuous, tenacious and self-interested animosity. When Louis XIV had the delinquent arrested and condemned by a special tribunal to perpetual exile—a punishment increased to perpetual imprisonment by the king—it was his accuser who took his place. He had actually held it since the 15th of September, 1661, ten days after the arrest of Fouquet; he received it officially, together with the title of *Controller-General of Finance*, in December, 1665. In the end he exercised cumulatively the functions of five or six of our present ministers, becoming, successively, Superintendant of Buildings, Secretary of State for the King's Household, Secretary of State for the Navy, and he had under his direction the guiding destinies of commerce, agriculture, the colonies, the fine arts and other matters.

Ruin of Fouquet

Controller-General

His character and his tendencies

He was an indefatigable worker, without geniality or adaptability, but of great activity, extremely zealous for the smooth working of the service in his charge, otherwise not in the least disinterested. He became extremely wealthy and profited by his position to marry his daughters to seigneurs of high position and to make the fortune of all his family. He brought to State affairs the somewhat narrow but clear conceptions of a trader and the orderly habits of a well-managed house of business. He may be justly said to have come on the scene with a *plan amounting almost to a system*, which is characterised by his name: *Colbertism.*

His principles: *Colbertism*

His basic idea was that it was necessary for the kingdom to become more wealthy, that it should make money and that it should make it by the means which up till then had always proved the most efficacious, by commerce. He conceived this commerce as "*a war of money*"; that is to say, as an enterprise energetically conducted against the commerce and the products of other nations. Production must be intensified by promoting the entry of raw materials and their conversion *within the kingdom* into manufactured goods, obtained under good conditions of quality and at cost price, so that their exportation may be facilitated. The difference between the cost of the raw materials and the selling price to the foreigner of the goods made from them represents *an increment to French capital.* Colbert consequently desires that all subjects should work, since the *general good of the State* will be necessarily augmented by their exertions. France is ill-equipped for intensive work of this kind; she neither has the roads, the canals, the ports, the shipping, nor the colonial markets which it demands. It is therefore urgently important to provide her with this indispensable equipment. It is advisable to encourage private initiative, promote it, organise it, and also to give close attention to the regulation of industrial production, to beware of the egoistic greed of manufacturers and merchants, who, to make more money in a shorter time, are always ready to cheat their customers at the risk of losing their custom. For this reason Colbert imposed minute and tyrannical regulations on industry, regarding the manufacturers as mere cog-wheels in the economic machine which he dreamt of constructing *for the king.*

Necessary prerequisites of success for Colbert

The minister, after unwearying persistence, succeeded in convincing Louis XIV of the excellence of these views. Unfortunately their realisation must have depended on the adoption of a manner of living to which there was never any sign that the "glorious" monarch would conform. Disbursements must be kept down, and exact accounts rendered for all; direct contact with reality must be obtained by visits to the provinces and the army; these must not be tours of ceremonial parade, but real visits of enquiry and inspection, regard must be had in all matters to the positive and substantial, with a resolute avoidance of all that is merely show, useless luxury, tinselled pomp and empty ostentation in general; all, alas! things that were nearest to the monarch's heart and that he was least able to forego. It was not long before Colbert realised this and was thrown into despair by finding that the defects and excesses of his master were in fact the sources of his own unsuccess, for unsuccess it was, as he realised only too well before he died. Yet energetic and tenacious as he was he went his way, never allowing himself to be long delayed by any protest or retarded by any genuine or pretended rights which he might infringe.

Attempt to reform the finances

He first attempted to rectify the disorder which had affected the finances, before his time, by compelling dishonest financiers to disgorge. The confiscation of Fouquet's possessions was accompanied with severe measures against the *traitants* (tax-gatherers) which served as an example and a warning. The Controller-General then did his best to establish order and close supervision on all sides and, above all, to draw up beforehand an *état de prévoyance* (preliminary estimate) under which receipts and expenses should balance one another. It was what we now know as a budget. For it to succeed, it would have been necessary for the king, before committing himself to expenditure, first to consider his resources and above all to renounce the use of *ordonnances au comptant* (orders on account); that is to say, orders to pay signed by his hand, and accounted for by him to no one. Colbert was never able to carry through either of these two capitally important proposals.

Efforts to enrich the realm

His only remaining resource was to make the king's revenue exceed the demands upon it. This he laboured to achieve, though probably with few illusions. He gave the peasants some alleviation by diminishing the *taille* in the hope of obtaining compensation in the return of the indirect taxes. He encouraged industry, to which he added some new branches. He regulated it and subjected it to a rigorous *protective system;* he developed commerce by establishing an excellent network of royal roads in completion of Sully's; by the digging of canals, especially that originally due to the initiative of Riquet which joins the Garonne to the Mediterranean (*Canal of the Two Seas*); by working out a vast plan for the utilising of all navigable rivers in France, and for the improvement of the ports; by founding new ports (Cette), founding shipyards which produced merchant-ships and war-ships in great number, and by assuring adequate recruitment of the navy by the *Inscription Maritime;* by arranging for the foundation of *Colonial Companies,* which received the monopoly of trade for one or another wide area overseas. Unfortunately, decrees and regulations were not enough to create life and command success. The Companies mainly failed; the English and the Dutch had too great a start. It was much the same with his other attempts: some noteworthy results were attained, but were still precarious and insufficient. *Colbertism,* all order and economy, imperatively demanded peace and prudence. The continual wars and the extravagant building which delighted Louis XIV, the entertainment and luxuries of the court nullified all the good intentions of the minister, who died in un-

Their poor results

popularity, in little favour with the king, and in great discouragement.

B. *Louvois.*

His origin and his rôle

The Marquis of Louvois (1639-1691) takes a place by the side of Colbert. He was the son of Michel Le Tellier, who had been Mazarin's man of confidence for the administration of the army. He himself was the principal minister of war of Louis XIV, acting first for his father in 1666, under his own name in 1677, when his father became Chancellor. He was no soldier, but an administrator, "a civil minister of war," as we now say. He did not inspire affection, being blunt and difficult of approach.

Reorganisation of the army

His work was to reorganise the army on the lines already laid down by his father, without making any great innovations, but correcting abuses by a strict superintendence of commanders of all ranks, and implacable severity. He does not appear to have had any comprehensive plan, but merely the fixed determination to place in the hands of the king an army, numerous and strong, well equipped and ready to take the field at short notice. This explains the principal creation of Louvois, which is that of the *Intendance*, a system of provisioning troops which gave them a hitherto unexampled mobility and independence of movement apart from the food resources of the country.

The *Intendance*

Spirit and meaning of the work of Louvois

All his remaining work related to the perfecting of detail and to suitable measures for making regulations respected. He did not abolish the sale of commissions which would have meant almost a social revolution, but he regulated it and furthered the promotion of poor and meritorious officers for whom he reserved the ranks of major and lieutenant-colonel. He did not replace the detestable method of *crimping* by a more modern organisation of recruiting, but he kept an eye on the manner in which it was conducted. In a word he introduced in all points, among institutions that were still uncertain, incomplete and unordered, such discipline, completion and precision as the times allowed. He reprimanded and even broke officers who did not strictly conform to his

The *Invalides*

orders. It is to him that the foundation at the *Hôtel des Invalides* is due, a hospital for mutilated and infirm soldiers.

C. *Vauban.*

The military engineer

He found the talent of *Vauban* a valuable auxiliary in all that pertained to attack and fortification of strongholds. Vauban was one of the lesser squires of the Nivernais. The most arduous sieges of the reign were conducted by him and he surrounded many fortresses with works reputed impregnable. He is most interesting, however, from another point of view. Riding continually up and down the kingdom from Metz to Brest, Bayonne to Toulon, Strasbourg to Dunkerque, he had opportunities of observing the life of the lesser folk of France at close quarters, and his heart was stirred with pity for their sufferings. He longed to find a remedy; he collected information, observed, calculated, reflected and became convinced that the king would find advantage and the people relief in a complete alteration of the system of direct taxation then in use. It would be sufficient to establish in its place a tax on income paid by all subjects which would vary from *one-twentieth* to *a tenth* according to the needs of the prince. His ideas worked out in detail were embodied in a book which he called *La Dîme Royale* (1707), because his tax resembled the *Dîme* which was levied by the Church on the goods themselves. The king was angered by the implicit criticism of his administration contained in the book. By a decree of the Council, *La Dîme Royale* was seized and destroyed. Vauban died six weeks later (March 30, 1707). Rarely had the proud despot been more unjust to one of his servants and that one a man who had been among the best and most honest of all.

The philanthropist and economist

La Dîme Royale

D. *The successors of Colbert and Louvois*

The ministers of the last part of the reign are from the mint of Colbert (his son Seignelay and his nephew Desmarets) or of Louvois (his son Barbezieux) to whom other men of very unequal value were added by the choice of the king. But those who were not lacking in experience, such as *Le Peletier*, who succeeded Colbert in the finances and *Desmarets* later

(1708-1715), had no longer any power to control circumstances. The frightful extravagance had made any balancing of the finances impossible and ensured that nothing could now prevent the economic ruin of an overburdened and exhausted country. The finances could only be fed further by proceedings akin to bankruptcy.

VI

Difficulties

A. *Those which arose from economic ruin*

Revolt of peasants

The difficulties that Louis XIV came to encounter in this period of his reign from 1682 to 1715 arose from several sources. First came the *economic ruin* which could not be long disguised however much it was desired to do so. *Le Détail de la France* by Boisguillebert (1699), *La Dîme Royale* just mentioned (1707), the reports of the intendants themselves, all were opening his eyes to the appalling truth. His people, particularly those in the country, had fallen into the blackest misery. This indeed was no novelty, for as early as 1675 in Brittany and Gascony fits of despair had driven the unfortunate peasants into insurrection. They were followed by "*bien de la penderie*" (lots of hanging) and Madame de Sévigné appears odious to us when she attempts to be witty about the barbarous repression conducted by the Duke of Chaulnes in Brittany. But hanging, though it stifled complaints, could not exterminate their cause. Towards 1709 the king himself found want knocking at his door, and was obliged, in order to obtain the ready money which he needed, to send his gold plate to the Mint.

B. *Those which come from the question of conscience*

1. The Jansenists

He encountered further difficulties from opposition for reasons of conscience. He had desired to impose his own religion—I should say rather its official forms—on all his subjects. He thought it improper that any among them should be separated from him in so important a matter, and in this opinion he was merely following the habitual intolerance of his time. He did nothing new. As it was in tradition that the confessor of the king should always be a *Jesuit*, he had always at his side a counsellor ill-disposed to the *Jansenists*, who were the great enemies of the Company of Jesus.

Jansenism, which arose in France between 1640 and 1668, in connection with a theological controversy upon divine "grace," and later developed into a system of morals and practical piety, had experienced many tribulations from its birth. Under Louis XIV they were redoubled and culminated in 1709 in an odious act of violence; the monastery of Port-Royal des Champs was destroyed, the nuns being distributed two by two among other convent houses by the strong hand of the police. A pontifical bull known as *Unigenitus* (1713) declared an intention to abolish the Jansenist spirit and doctrine. Unfortunately Parliament was permeated with both the one and the other. The bull was coldly received and its application afterwards made many serious enemies for the government of Louis XV.

Brutalities and failure of Louis XIV

2. The pope

The king fell out with the pope himself. He had, since the beginning of his reign, adopted an arrogant and intractable attitude towards the Holy See, in connection with the death in an unfortunate brawl of a page of Monsieur de Créqui, his ambassador at Rome. He had demanded "satisfaction" from the pontiff on exorbitant and humiliating terms. In 1673 he proposed to extend to all the archbishoprics and bishoprics of the kingdom a right recognised by tradition only in relation to some of them. It was known as the *régale* (the royal privilege). This was the right temporarily to take in charge and administer a vacant bishopric and the nominations to its benefices during the vacancy. The pope protested, on the complaint of two French bishops, those of Alet[10] and of Pamiers.[11] This was the starting-point of a quarrel which the king rapidly extended. He caused Bossuet to draw up and an

The *régale*

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[10] Now a small town in the department of Aude.

[11] Pamiers, now chief town of arrondissement in the department of Ariège.

The Declaration of 1682

Assembly of the clergy to pass, by vote in 1682, the *Four Articles* of the *Gallican Declaration*, which asserted the complete temporal independence of kings and princes in regard to the pope; which recognised the spiritual supremacy of the pontiff, with the reservation that the Oecumenical Council remained over him; which stated that the sacred canons, touching the apostolic power, were to be respected, but equally so "*the rules, customs and accepted constitution in the kingdom of France and the Gallican Church*"; which recalled that the judgment of the pope, even in matters of faith, is only "*infallible if it is confirmed by the consent of the Church.*" A royal edict made the Declaration the juridical basis of education in theology in France.

Victory of the pope

The pope held his own, and in the end it was Louis XIV who yielded on the essential point in dispute. In 1693 he gave Innocent XII to understand that he implicitly withdrew his decree and the pontiff, in return, accepted the extension of the *régale.* For the rest, the king endeavoured to induce Bossuet to publish a *Défense de la déclaration gallicane* (Defence of the Gallican declaration). The prelate promised, postponed and finally withdrew. A few Parliaments alone retained the *Declaration* as a law of the State and sometimes made use of it. This exasperating quarrel had not failed to cause trouble in the Church, but it had at least the advantage of convincing the king that his will was not everywhere supreme.

3. The Protestants. The situation in 1661

His treatment of the Protestants exhibits one of the worst sides of his despotism. Mazarin had shown favour to the Reformers; these, purged of the agitators who had led them astray under Louis XIII, had shown qualities which had earned his esteem. They took part in no intrigues, they worked hard and they prospered. Henceforward, putting high ambitions aside—with the loss of their nobles who left them to push their own fortunes at court—they came more and more to seek proselytes among the country folk and the working classes.

At the beginning of the personal reign of Louis XIV there may have been 1,200,000 Protestants in France. Their 630 churches were mainly distributed in Normandy, Saintonge, Languedoc, Vivarais and Dauphiné. Having no hope of great success in any public career, some of those among them who were well-to-do had applied themselves to commerce and industry; diligent and earnest, they were usually successful, and they formed an extremely important element in the economic life of the country. They had much wealth at their disposal.

Confirmation of the Edict of Nantes

After the death of Louis XIII on the 8th of July, 1643, and again after the Fronde, on the 21st of May, 1652, royal declarations had solemnly confirmed the Edict of Nantes. But the *Assembly of the Clergy of France* detested the Edict as a recognition of heresy; they execrated the liberty of conscience which was its foundation and they were persistent in efforts to obtain its total abolition. Every time that the young king received delegates from this great ecclesiastical body, he was to hear appeals to his zeal and piety as a Catholic, to re-establish *unity of faith,* such a unity, in fact, as contemporary thought tended to believe essential to any political aggregate like the kingdom. They represented to him that the Edict of Nantes had been merely an expedient of Henry IV for affecting transition to the establishment of a position more in accordance with logic and reason. They sought to persuade him, as they were without doubt persuaded themselves, that firmness alone was needed to recall the wanderers to the fold. It may be remarked that the Reformers themselves, placed in a similar position, would not have reasoned otherwise, and that in parishes where they had the upper hand, and occasionally in others, they continually gave only too clear and extremely indiscreet proofs of their own intolerance.

Action of the *Assembly of the Clergy* on the king

Position taken by Louis XIV

Louis XIV, ignorant as he was of religious matters, stiff-necked in his pride, offended by Protestant dissent, could hardly fail to accept suggestions which must have seemed to him quite legitimate. But to revoke an act of this kind, passed by his grandfather, and confirmed by his father and himself, must have appeared to him no simple matter. He determined, therefore, to keep the Huguenots strictly within the bounds of the Edict, "*in the narrowest bounds which justice and decency may permit*," and to refuse them systematically all favour or countenance, "*and this in kindness, not in severity, to oblige them without violence to consider from time to time if there was any good reason for their voluntarily depriving themselves of the advantage which they might share with my other subjects.*" These few words taken from the *Mémoires* of the king speak for themselves as to his view of the problem.

The régime of *Strict Observance*

He had determined to apply to the Protestants what is known as the régime of *Strict Observance*, by which everything not formally permitted is forbidden. The effect was to make practical life extremely difficult for them, forming, as it did, an excuse for perpetual and exasperating interferences and troublesome restrictions of every sort and kind. Its one-sided and ingenious application ended by practically nullifying even the most explicit concessions and guarantees of the Edict. The representations of the clergy and the exhortations of the king's confessor, unceasingly incited the king to deal, by his authority, such a blow as would make him no less glorious than Theodosius and Charlemagne, those "*heroes of Christianity.*"

Attempt to convert the Huguenots

One admirable solution of the Protestant question was obvious: to convert the Huguenots; to recall them to the Church by persuasion. Diverse attempts in this direction were made without much success. Few, indeed, of the Catholic doctors were capable of successful argument with the Huguenot pastors; Bossuet himself had the worst of a colloquy with Claude (1678). Controversy having led to nothing, an attempt was made to purchase conversions and a fund for this purpose was raised and was administered by a convert, Pelisson (1676). Such a plan might possibly have succeeded among the poorest, but it does not seem likely that there could have been any serious hopes of buying many converts with the *six livres* which was the average price paid for a conversion. Those who yielded to persuasion were not long, it was said, in reverting to their errors so that they might be ransomed afresh, sometimes three or four times in succession. All the converters desired was a sufficiency of well-filled lists to present to the king.

The orientation of the king after 1680

When Louis XIV fell under the influence of Madame de Maintenon (herself a convert[12]) from 1680 onwards, he began to dwell more and more seriously on his salvation and on the need of atoning for the scandals of his youth by some work of true merit. Father de la Chaise, his confessor, obtained a growing ascendancy over his conscience. Circumstances were now favourable; the king could be so worked on as to lead him to accelerate the return of the heretics to the Church "*by other means*" than those hitherto employed.

Violence: the *Dragonnades*

These other means meant that intendants were to be instructed to exercise salutary pressure upon all recalcitrants, especially by the practice of *dragonnades*, the chief responsibility for which appears to fall upon Louvois, anxious that his zeal should be a contrast to Colbert's lack of enthusiasm. The latter dreaded the economic consequences of a persecution of the Protestants. The first *dragonnades* date from 1680. They consisted in billeting soldiers, the worst characters in the army, in the houses of Huguenots whose subjugation was desired. These rapscallions, left a free hand, could do as they liked, and given up to every kind of excess, were the best of missionaries. Capuchins accompanied them, ready to pluck the fruits of their zeal. Desire to be freed from them, or fear of being afflicted with them, produced a mass of conversions, and the intendants, realising the eagerness of the king for the lengthening of the lists, redoubled their activity to that end from 1680 to 1685.

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[12] Grand-daughter of Agrippa d'Aubigné, the author of *Tragiques*. Taking advantage of the straitened circumstances of her mother, some Catholic friends had placed the child in a convent of the Ursulines, where she was converted.

The Edict superfluous

Other measures accompanied these outrages: against schools, against the authority of Huguenot fathers of families, to deprive them of the religious education of their children, against their churches. Meanwhile the list of converts swelled with admirable rapidity. The moment arrived when it became easy to convince the king that the number of irreconcilables had become so infinitesimal that there was no longer any reason for the existence of the Edict of Nantes. It was revoked on the *18th of October, 1685.* This decision was received with almost universal enthusiasm and approbation. Bossuet described it as a "*miracle.*" God alone could have achieved "*this marvel.*" Only such men as Vauban and Saint-Simon understood what injustice had been done and what an irreparable error had been made and they held their peace. The execution of the Edict of Abolition had still worse effects. It had in no way suppressed the liberty of conscience which was now attacked anew by other measures, and horrible dragonnades took place. The Reformers, in desperation, left the kingdom in great numbers, despite all efforts to prevent them. Those are estimated to have numbered 200,000 men, many being artisans and agriculturists, supremely useful to the community, together with men of the highest moral character. They sought refuge in Switzerland, Holland and England, in the Scandinavian countries, in Germany and especially in Brandenburg, whither they bore sentiments of no good import to Louis XIV or to France. Furthermore, the peasants in the Cévennes rose in a revolt which is known as *the war of the Camisards* (1702-1704) and no less a soldier than the illustrious Marshal Villars was needed to make an end of those unfortunates.

The revocation: Its reception (1685)

Louis XIV unsuccessful in suppressing *heresy*

Louis XIV had certainly struck the Protestant churches a terrible blow. Their fortunes were shattered, but at the cost of grave damage to the country, and even so the end was unattained. The forced conversions were transient; Protestantism did not vanish from France. Secret worship was organised in all parts, resulting occasionally in extraordinary religious exaltation. The king thus failed in the end with the Huguenots as with the pope and the Jansenists. His conflicts with them brought him only enduring and disastrous troubles. There is some moral solace in the corroboration by the facts of the view expressed by d'Argenson, lieutenant of police, that "*neither the fear of the law nor the authority of man can change inward opinion.*"

VII

The end of the reign

Profound sadness

The reign ended in unpopularity and sadness, to which were added bitter disappointments in foreign policy, and successive bereavements which in the end left the old king with but a single and very delicate child at his side, his grandson. Public opinion had begun to lose patience; insolent pamphlets and ominous songs had been in circulation for some years. "*One sees people beside themselves with want,*" wrote Madame de Maintenon in 1709, and she was beginning to be afraid. A party of nobles, inspired in the first instance by Fénelon, and grouped round the Duke of Burgundy, then after the death of these two personages, reconstituted about the Duke of Orléans, was planning secretly the overthrow of the *commis* and the replacement of their harsh absolutism by a limited monarchy (*monarchie tempérée*) which was to be *aristocratic*. The king had lost the affection, confidence and respect of his subjects. His death, which was not undignified, occurred on the 1st of September, 1715.

Conclusion

The *Roi Soleil* enjoyed great prestige in Europe; all kings became more or less his imitators. The influence of France, too, at that time radiated in all directions. Through her language, letters and art, she held indeed the intellectual hegemony of the Western World. Outwardly and superficially, the reign seems glorious above all others, the century itself is *le siècle de Louis XIV* (the age of Louis XIV). But its one positive gift to France was in reality nothing but misery, an overdriven and exhausted people, a diminished population, and a lower class struggling for bare existence under conditions whose tragic picture has been drawn for us by some writers of the time, among them La Bruyère and Fénelon.

The country could undoubtedly raise itself from this economic abasement in the absence of wars, but Louis XIV left behind him two constituted bodies whose very continuance was enough indefinitely to prolong these disastrous conditions. One is the *court* which, interposed like a screen between the prince and his subjects, keeps these out of sight and hearing. This court, so long as it is satisfied itself, thinks that all must be well with the world. The other is the *bureaucracy* with its accepted dogma of the legitimacy of the exploitation of the country for the sake of the king. All force is in its hands, and as its very existence depends on the maintenance of the conditions from which it has arisen, it will view ideas of reform with small favour, and will do its best to ensure that any changes made are as small as possible.

The monarchy has lost all sight of the principle upon which it depends, as Montesquieu was soon to remark. It has lost all sense of the public good, and for that reason the despotism of Louis XIV is preparing the way for the Revolution. As early as 1710, Fénelon, in a letter to his friend the Duke of Chevreuse lamenting the distress of the realm, holds the king responsible for it. He says: "*It is by the subversion of all order that he has engulfed himself in this abyss, from which it appears impossible that he should ever find rescue.*" He did himself find rescue in the sense that he was still on the throne at his death, but the monarchy remained in the gulf.

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CHAPTER XXII

FRANCE IN EUROPE FROM 1598 TO 1715

The situation in 1598

The Austrian peril

THE Religious Wars having ended, France found herself once more in the presence of the *Austrian Peril.* As a matter of fact the will of Charles Quint had divided the house of Austria into two branches. The entrance of his brother Ferdinand into possession of the Empire and the German domains of the family of Hapsburg had marked the origin of the *German branch,* while the inheritance, by Philip II, of the remainder of his father's domains marked the origin of the *Spanish.* Of the two the Spanish was still the more formidable, the strength of the German branch being impaired by the lack of cohesion of the Germanic Empire, in which the emperor was far from being master, and by the hostility of the Protestant German princes who still mistrusted their Catholic sovereign.

The effort for reunion of the two Austrian branches

It was to the interest of the two branches to unite, either by obtaining the election of the King of Spain to the imperial crown, or, more simply, by establishing direct contact between their domains. The Spaniards, installed in northern Italy and in the Netherlands, could join hands with the Austrians, either by the high valley of the Adda, named the Valteline, which communicated by the pass of Stelvio with the Tyrol, or by the Palatinate which bordered on Austrian Alsace. French policy was necessarily to prevent this reunion of the two branches; that is to say, to come to terms with any enemies of the house of Austria, and in particular with the German Protestants. This was done by Henry IV and Richelieu, who were, in fact, successful in foiling all Austrian plans which seemed likely to be hurtful to France. Mazarin went still further. He reduced both houses, the German and the Spanish,

Policy necessary to France

The general course of events

one after the other, to impotence, and raised Louis XIV to a position so eminent as to make him to all appearance sovereign master in Europe. But the king was not long in losing this hegemony through the number of coalitions provoked against him by his intractable pride and inordinate ambition. In the end these coalitions overthrew his power, and by 1715 he had lost all the advantages commanded by him in 1661.

I

The policy of Henry IV

The situation in Germany

Henry IV, after imposing the treaty of Vervins upon Spain in 1598, had turned his attention to German affairs. The emperor, advised by the Jesuits, had undertaken to recover the country for Catholicism, not only from zeal for his own religion, but also because, desiring to become the real sovereign of the Empire instead of being merely its suzerain, he believed that its *religious unity* would promote and possibly establish its *political unity*. The Protestant princes who saw the danger to themselves of such an enterprise soon became anxious. Those most nearly threatened, the Calvinists, organised themselves for resistance and formed, in 1608, a kind of confederation named the *Evangelical Union*, under the direction of the *Count Palatine of the Rhine*, one of the seven Electors of the Empire. This union was entered by the Calvinists, since they had no share in the guarantees conceded to the German Lutherans by the peace of Augsburg in 1555. In the following year the Catholics formed the *Holy League*, which took the Duke of Bavaria for its chief.

Preparations of the Calvinists and of the Catholics

The succession of Juliers and the intervention of Henry IV

Henry IV had viewed the formation of the *Evangelical Union* with sympathy and had made ready to intervene in the now inevitable conflict, when the death occurred of the Duke John-Williams of Cleves, Juliers and Berg (March 25, 1609). He left no direct heir, but his estates, to which their position in the region of the Rhine gave much more importance than their small extent might appear to warrant, became the subject of dispute between several claimants. This question of succession soon began to grow still more complicated. The emperor proceeded to occupy and place in sequestration the principal among the properties whose ownership was thus being contested. The Protestant claimants, believing themselves wronged—in which they were probably right—the two with the best titles, the Elector of Brandenburg and the Count Palatine of Neuburg, came to an understanding and appealed to the *Union*. Henry IV mobilised an army and promised his help.

Death of the king

In all appearance, the outbreak was about to occur, but the King of France was assassinated (May 14, 1610), and the Elector Palatine died soon afterwards (September 9). The Palatine of Neuburg and the Brandenburger fell out with one another and a provisional settlement of the matter postponed the German conflagration for a time.

The German conflict postponed

II

The policy of Richelieu

After a period of indecision and weakness due to the ministry of Concini (1614-1617) and that of de Luynes (1617-1621) and a brief reconciliation with Spain, marked by the marriage of Louis XIII with Anne of Austria, daughter of Philip III, in 1615, Richelieu came into power and revived the tradition of Henry IV. This was, moreover, that indicated by common sense. The conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants of Germany, delayed in 1610, had finally come to a head in 1618. Its starting-point had been an attempt made by the new King of Bohemia, soon to be emperor, Ferdinand of Styria, an ardent disciple of the Jesuits, to re-establish Catholic unity in his States. The revolting Bohemians had chosen the Elector Palatine, the director of the Evangelical Union, for their chief and king; as, at the same time (August, 1619), Ferdinand of Styria had become emperor, the question had be-

The war in Germany

come so widened as to interest all Germany. The Holy League had naturally taken the side of the emperor.

The situation in 1624

When Richelieu was entrusted with the direction of the foreign policy of France (1624) this *Thirty Years' War*, as it is called, had already lasted five years and was turning out badly for the Protestants. The Bohemians had been vanquished (1620) and punished terribly; the Palatine was expelled from his States and deposed from his electoral dignity, which was granted by imperial authority to the Duke of Bavaria. Ferdinand II, encouraged by these successes, dreamt of extending his plan of Catholic restoration to all Germany, which would have made him in truth and in fact master of the Empire. His success would have made him extremely dangerous to France. The establishment on her flank of a great and unified Austrian State, acting hand in hand with Spain, would have subjected her to an irrefrangible encirclement. All would have been over with her hopes of expansion towards the East, and the old *Francia Media* would have been lost to her at one blow.

The projects of Ferdinand II

The action of Richelieu

It appeared to the cardinal that the state of home affairs precluded for the moment any direct armed intervention in Germany, but he set himself without delay to weaken Spain, and make difficulties for the emperor.

A. *In Italy*

The Spaniards always intent, as they were, on establishing contact with the Austrians, had made sure, as they believed, of the Valteline, by causing it to be occupied by papal troops. These Richelieu dislodged (1624). He was less fortunate on the Rhine where the Spanish had seized the Palatinate in 1623; he could not expel them without such war as he felt himself unable to sustain. As a counter-stroke, he organised in Italy in 1629 a league to impede their activities; the Duke of Savoy, who had taken their side, was forcibly compelled to change his course, and the succession to Mantua, which had become vacant, was given to a French prince (1631).

B. *In Germany*

In Germany the cardinal induced King Christian IV of

Intervention of *Denmark*

Situation in 1630

Denmark to intervene on the Protestant side. He was merely a petty prince and could not even count on the support of all Protestant seigneurs in Germany, but the emperor's own military resources were weak and the army of the Holy League, commanded by Tilly in the name of the Duke of Bavaria, was no stronger than that of Denmark. Thus Christian IV's enterprise was not really unreasonable. It did not, however, succeed. An adventurer on the grand scale named Wallenstein, a member of an illustrious Bohemian family, who had gone over to the emperor, raised for him a stout and numerous army of mercenaries. The Danes beaten by this army as well as by Tilly's were promptly dismissed from the scene (1626).

Defeat of the Danes

Edict of Restitution

The emperor thought that he held Germany in his subjection. He issued the famous *Edict of Restitution* (March 6, 1629) which restored to the Catholics most of the possessions of which the Reformation had deprived them and he made ready for a decisive effort which should place the princes of the whole empire at his mercy. The Catholics, such as the Duke of Bavaria, naturally viewed his approach with no more pleasure than did the Protestant princes.

Diet of Ratisbon (1630)

At the Diet of Ratisbon, where the emperor desired to have his son elected as *King of the Romans*—that is to say, heir to the imperial crown—the agent of Richelieu, Father Joseph du Tremblay, in support of the Duke of Bavaria, induced the Electors, first, to demand that Wallenstein's army should be disbanded; when the emperor had resigned himself to this preliminary condition, he urged them to refuse him the election by which he desired to assure the future of his house. This was a severe reverse for Ferdinand, and a warning as to the difficulty which he might still find in subjugating the German princes (1630).

Intervention of *Sweden*

Richelieu had discovered a new political ally in Gustavus Adolphus, the young King of Sweden, who had the best army of the time, and was giving free rein in Germany to his Lutheran ardour and his national ambition. The Swede desired to secure his possession of the two shores of the Baltic Sea. The cardinal waited while Gustavus Adolphus landed in Germany (6th of July, 1630) and then negotiated with him a treaty of alliance. The military successes of the Protestant king were disastrous to the fortunes of the emperor, and put the Holy League out of the fight; unfortunately, he fell in the moment of victory at the battle of Lützen [1] (November 16, 1632), at a season when being more concerned for his own interests than for the success of his ally, he had begun to agree not too well with the latter.

Treaty of *Baerwald* (January 23, 1631)

Death of Gustavus Adolphus (1632)

Direct intervention of *France*

The hour had come when it became necessary "*to put the hand to the sword*" against the emperor as well as against his best supporter, the King of Spain, and Richelieu, freed in France from his major anxiety as to the Protestants, decided without delay. He reorganised Protestant resistance in Germany, renewed his alliance with Sweden, made one with Holland, took into his pay Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, who had succeeded to the army of Gustavus Adolphus, and finally himself intervened in Germany, in Italy, in the Pyrenees. He suffered some reverses. For in France, in 1636, the Spaniards captured Corbie, a small fortified town on the Somme, invaded Picardy, and pushed their skirmishers as far as Pontoise, almost to the gates of Paris. But on the whole the French arms obtained substantial successes. The cardinal desired to utilise the opportunity afforded by this resumption of the struggle between the house of France and the house of Austria, for the adjustment to his country's advantage of the question of its natural frontiers, understanding by this, he said, putting France "*in all places where ancient Gaul had once been.*" He had not time to realise so vast a design, but he conquered

The conquests

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[1] His adversary was Wallenstein, whom Ferdinand II, driven to extremity, had recalled.

Roussillon, *Artois* and *Alsace*. A few weeks before his death, he had obliged the Duke of Bouillon, compromised in the conspiracy of Cinq-Mars, to relinquish to the king his principality of *Sedan* and *Raucourt*, thus obtaining an advantageous footing in the valley of the Meuse and to the north of Lorraine.

The general situation at the death of Richelieu (1642)

When Richelieu died (December 4, 1642), his conduct of affairs, *always prudent, practical and realistic*, had compelled the emperor to relinquish his grandiose designs; those, that is, for the annihilation of Protestantism and the establishment of political unity in Germany. The German Hapsburg was not far from admitting defeat, and the Spaniard was no longer in any case to give him effective support. A few days after the death of Louis XIII, the victory of *Rocroy*, won by the Duke of Enghien and the Marshal of Gassion (May 19, 1643), dealt a fatal blow to the military reputation and strength of Spain. This was one more fruit of the foresight and energy of the great minister just dead.

III

The policy of Mazarin

Mazarin, to whom Richelieu had handed on his task, had neither the circumspection nor the wisdom of his master. He was "*a virtuoso of great politics*" in which subject he was much more interested than in France, pushing his ambitions far beyond what was necessary for security or even for the territorial completion of the kingdom. He dreamt of making his king the *master of all Europe*.

A. *Capitulation of the emperor*

Treaties of Westphalia (1648)

He had little trouble in overcoming the emperor. A combined march of the French and Swedes upon Vienna in 1645 did not succeed in penetrating to the capital, but it greatly alarmed Ferdinand III, who vainly cast about him for help. The German princes deserted him one after another; even Maximilian of Bavaria fell off (1647). Since 1642, negotiations had been ostensibly in progress in Westphalia, in the two towns of Münster and Osnabrück; these conversations actually became definite only after 1645. The negotiations, extremely laborious and conducted on the French side by d'Avaux and Servien, did not arrive at their end till the victory of the Prince of Condé at *Lens* (August 20, 1648) had convinced the emperor that he had no longer anything to expect from Spain; and the march of Turenne and of Wrangel, the Swede, on Vienna had left him no resource but resignation. The treaties named "*of Westphalia*" were signed on the 24th of October, 1648. They adjusted the political and religious question in Germany, and accorded to France *Alsace* and the town of Brisach, on the right bank of the Rhine. The *Republic of Strassburg* was not included in this surrender. The Alsatian territories, which had become German in language and manners, belonged geographically to France and, in 1648, when their transfer from one rule to the other took place, no patriotic resistance arose in the country. In less than half a century the Alsatians became the most loyal and devoted subjects of the King of France.

Acquisition of Alsace

B. *Capitulation of Spain*

Spain had refused to make terms. She counted on the troubles of the Fronde as likely somewhat to relieve her fortunes—now much depressed—and to secure for her better conditions. Her reckoning was perhaps not greatly astray, for Mazarin, hampered by troubles at home, took ten years to bring the King of Spain to terms. He succeeded in doing so only by isolating him completely by an alliance which he concluded in 1657 with *Oliver Cromwell*, Lord Protector of England, and by the formation of a league with the German princes of the western part of the Empire, under the direction of the King of France (*League of the Rhine*, 1658). A new military effort, led by Turenne in the Netherlands, broke down the last resistance of the enemy.

The treaty of the Pyrenees (1659)

As, however, the pride of Philip IV would not yield even before necessity itself, Mazarin arranged a little comedy which was perhaps not in the best taste, but was remarkably successful. He pretended to desire the marriage of Louis XIV with a princess of Savoy and went in person to Lyons, where the Duchess of Savoy and her daughter came to meet him. At bottom, the King of Spain had no real hope of obtaining adequate conditions of peace except by the marriage of his daughter, Maria Theresa, with the young king, to which, however, it was hard for him to reconcile himself. But when he became aware of what was going on at Lyons he was seized with alarm, and a secret agent, named Pimentel, was sent to offer Mazarin what he was expecting (November, 1658). In a moment, the proposals for the Savoyard marriage were broken off and the court returned to Paris, where negotiations began. They ended in preliminary agreements signed by Mazarin and Pimentel (June 4). Conferences held in an island of the Bidassoa on the Spanish frontier, between Mazarin and the Spanish minister, Don Luis de Haro, confirmed them and the *treaty of the Pyrenees* was signed on the 7th of November, 1659.

Advantages gained by France

France retained part of her conquests: Roussillon, Cerdagne, Artois, excluding the towns of Aire and Saint-Omer and the series of fortified places on the Northern and Northeastern frontiers. Louis XIV took back into favour the Prince of Condé, who had gone over to Spain at the end of the Fronde.

The marriage clause

The essential clause was that on the marriage of the Infanta Maria Theresa to the king. The queen-mother, Anne of Austria, for family and sentimental reasons, strongly desired this union, and Mazarin, in order to achieve it, gave up his own hopes of placing his niece Maria Mancini on the throne of France.[2] The young queen relinquished all her prospective rights to succession in Spain, without exception, subject to a dowry of 500,000 gold crowns; her renunciation, that is, was conditional upon the payment of this considerable sum: Mazarin was well aware that the King of Spain could never raise it. In that event, it would be possible for the King of France to claim and to acquire the monarchy of Spain itself in the nearer or farther future.

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[2] Louis XIV had been much in love with this young lady and had made her, it appears, a promise of marriage. But the cardinal had her sent to La Rochelle during the negotiations with Spain and the young king submitted to reasons of State.

Mazarin's intentions

Mazarin has been blamed for not having been content to claim the Netherlands, whose assimilation to France would undoubtedly not then have involved many difficulties, and with having sacrificed the practical advantages of a national policy to chimerical dreams of one which was dynastic. It is difficult for us to know what his real intentions were and to distinguish his considered plans from those imposed on him by necessities, possibly inevitable; we have to take into account the opposition which the annexation of the Spanish Netherlands would have provoked in the Empire, in Holland, in England and also the exhaustion of France. However that may be, the marriage clause was to bring upon Louis XIV and upon his realm far more evil than good, magnificent as were the prospects which it held out at first sight. The marriage was celebrated on the 9th of June, 1660.

C. *Completion of the diplomatic work of Mazarin*

A series of treaties with all States which were then of any account in Europe completed the diplomatic work of the cardinal. When he died, on the 9th of March, 1661, he left the hegemony of Europe in the hands of the young king. Much prudence and moderation on the part of Louis XIV would have been needed to retain this position of preponderance and to avoid dangerous temptations. But he was insanely proud; he could not understand how insensate was the dream of absorbing the Spanish monarchy, and he thought in his heart that neither any thing nor any person was capable of resisting him seriously. He looked only at the apparent greatness of his power, and failed to take into account how slight was the economic strength of France. The future so bright to Mazarin's eyes was in reality dark.

The situation in 1661

IV

The policy of Louis XIV

His auxiliaries

Louis XIV found ready to his hand for his diplomatic work various remarkable men perfectly capable of continuing the work of Mazarin and Richelieu, in whose school they had been moulded: *Hugues de Lionne* up to 1671; then *Arnaud de Pomponne* up to 1699, except for an interval of disgrace in which his place was held by *Colbert de Croissy,* brother of the great Colbert (1679-1696) and finally *Torcy,* son of Colbert de Croissy and son-in-law of Pomponne, who directed foreign affairs till 1715. Unfortunately, their earnestness and experience were always overshadowed by the omnipotence of the king, which too often carried him beyond the bounds of all reason through his "*love of glory,*" his sensibility, often only too ready to take offence, and his taste and his inclination for the use of force—the king to whom Louvois, up to 1691, had preached the gospel of military power. In no quarter was the personal influence of Louis more strongly exercised than in the conduct of his foreign policy.

The influence of the king

A. *The first actions. Their meaning and effect*

No sooner had he entered the field, than the young king began by arousing disquiet and hostility in European minds by a series of deeds in which his imperious character and his insupportable pride were made manifest to the world.

He compelled the King of Spain, after a dispute which had arisen in London between the representatives of the two kingdoms, to send him written apologies, which he caused to be read aloud in public before a large assemblage of diplomats and officials and to direct his ambassadors to yield precedence to those of France in all foreign courts (1662). He refused *the salute of the flag* to the English navy on the British seas (1661). Following a brawl, in which the Corsican Guard of the pope at Rome had severely handled two attendants of the French ambassador, the Duke of Créqui, the pontiff, Alexander

VII, was constrained, after brutal threats and after the confiscation of Avignon, to reconcile himself to most humiliating reparations (1662-1664): the disbanding of his Corsican Guard, the erection of an expiatory pyramid on the place of attack, together with the dispatch of a legate to Paris to convey his apologies. Louis XIV had no scruple in showing the pope, whose *honorary primacy* among sovereigns fretted him unceasingly, that he was the stronger of the two. Had he been able to make secure his election as emperor, he would eagerly have done so; but his hands being tied, he let pass no opportunity of ridiculing the imperial vanity in private and of assuming in public towards the sovereign, who still retained something of the ancient prestige of Rome, an attitude of malevolent aversion. He regarded himself as "*first among kings, well able to show an example to others, and in no way disposed to follow theirs, if he does not desire to do so.*" Between them and himself he declined to admit an "*equality which does not exist.*"

B. *The succession of Philip IV*

There could be no question of any claim by Louis XIV upon the whole heritage of Philip IV of Spain, because that prince, by a second marriage, had a son, Charles, who would legitimately succeed him on the throne; but the King of France, knowing that his father-in-law was rapidly nearing his end, made preparations to lay hands upon part of his heritage. He adopted, as a pretext, his anxiety to give a dowry to the queen and to improve the frontiers of his kingdom. It was on the Netherlands that he thus turned his covetous eyes. There was in Brabant, among the usages regulating private inheritance, a certain *right of dévolution*, under which the property of a father who had married again belonged to the children of the first marriage from the moment that the death of their mother placed them in the position of owners, while the father retained the usufruct; on his death, they entered into full possession of their inheritance. Louis XIV invoked this right in the name of

The claims of Louis XIV

The *right of dévolution*

his queen and initiated a search, well beforehand and conducted "*with extreme diligence*," to ascertain which countries among the Spanish provinces of the North recognised the usage in question. When Philip IV died, on the 17th of September, 1665, he had taken care to refer in his will to the renunciation of Maria Theresa and to affirm that the Netherlands should remain united to the other possessions of the Spanish crown; a vain precaution. His son-in-law was determined to prosecute his design. The French king caused to be composed a *Treatise on the rights of the Most Christian Queen over certain States of the Spanish Monarchy*, under which he claimed Brabant, Anvers, Malines, Limburg, Namur, Upper Gueldres, part of Franche-Comté and others.

Death of Philip IV

He thought, and rightly, that the emperor, on account of Austrian solidarity, and Holland, which would dread the prospect of France for a neighbour, and England, duly apprehensive that the possession of the Netherlands would greatly increase the capacity of France for commercial and marine activity, and Sweden herself and the German princes of the Rhine would take umbrage at his design. Hugues de Lionne conducted with great ability a series of negotiations which appeared to have put these apprehensions to rest, and to have isolated Spain, and thereupon Louvois put his troops in the field. A short war, known as that of the *Dévolution*, inglorious, since Spain was in no condition to resist, put the king in possession of Flanders (1667). Condé, that he might definitely recover the king's favour, conquered Franche-Comté for him in a few days (February, 1668), but at that moment the legitimate fears of England, Holland and Sweden took precedence over diplomatic conventions. These three States agreed to offer themselves as mediators between the belligerents; that is to say, to prevent Louis pushing his success any farther. He did not venture, after some hesitation, to run the risk of a coalition against him, but accepted mediation. The treaty of

The war of Dévolution (1667-1668)

The triple alliance of the Hague

Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1668)

Aix-la-Chapelle (May 2, 1668) left him French Flanders and a line of fortresses on the northern frontier. He was disappointed; he had hoped to lay hands on all the Spanish Netherlands and he held the *ingratitude* and the *insolence* of the Dutch responsible for his repulse. He was greatly tempted to fall on them with his full strength instead of negotiating, but that was a matter for the future.

Irritation of Louis XIV

C. *The war with Holland* (1672-1678)

Diplomatic preparations

The diplomatists resumed their patient operations against Holland, isolating her from all her neighbours, by agreements which they believed to be trustworthy. They even induced Charles II, King of England, to take action in their interest, who, however, with important plans in his head—for reprisals upon his people for the Revolution of 1648—had but small resources, and had been obliged to resign himself and accept the assistance offered him by the King of France. At the same time, military preparations on a large scale, conducted by Louvois, were ready to place nearly 180,000 men in the field.

Efforts of Holland for peace

Their uselessness

The States-General of the United Provinces, who saw the storm gathering, and knew that they were in no condition to resist it, did all that they could to divert it. They endeavoured to negotiate, protested that they were well disposed towards the king. Louis XIV did not deign to give them a hearing. His pride never pardoned a wound, and the Hollanders had wounded it cruelly by evoking the formation of the Triple Alliance of the Hague in 1668 and possibly still more so by showing too ostentatious a satisfaction at having cried check to the Roi Soleil.[3] Colbert saw without displeasure an opportunity to free the maritime commerce of France from its most redoubtable competitor, and even public opinion appeared to share the resentment of the prince.

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[3] A report was current that they had caused a medal to be struck representing Joshua stopping the sun in its course and bearing the proud inscription, *in conspectu meo stetit sol = At my glance the sun stood still.* No one is recorded to have seen this piece and for good reason, but the mere legend of its existence was sufficient to cause exasperation in France.

C'est vous, pêcheurs de haran,	You, it is, herring-fishers,
C'est vous, vendeurs de safran,	You dealers in saffron,
Qui prétendez d'un fromage	Who affirm that with a cheese
Faire au soleil un écran?	You can screen the sun?

Thus jested the good La Fontaine himself in his *Virelai sur les Hollandois* (1672), expressing what was probably the universal feeling. France was still sharing the ardour of her king.

The invasion of Holland

The invasion of Holland, which found that country in no condition to resist, was so successful that the king verily believed he had brought the enemy to his knees; for this reason he made exorbitant demands in reply to proposals for peace upon very advantageous terms made to him by the little Republic. Despair then gave new courage to the Hollanders; they made a revolution, in which their government of great merchants was reconstituted from top to bottom. Its place was filled by the election, with the title of *Stadthouder*, of Prince *William of Orange*, a man of much reflection and great tenacity.

Revolution of the party of Orange: William *Stadthouder*

The turn in alliances: league against Louis XIV

Very soon, the allies of Louis XIV, disquieted by his ambitious projects, left him one after another, including Charles II of England; the majority went even so far as to join a league against him at the instigation of William of Orange. At the same time the French army was compelled to evacuate Holland by an inundation which the inhabitants caused by breaking the dikes: Turenne and Condé, however, won brilliant victories on the Rhine and in the Netherlands, but the former fell in battle in 1675 and the latter, worn out, had soon to give place to younger men, Créqui and Luxembourg, "*from the mint of M. de Turenne*," as was said, who were indeed of the true stamp. The king, however, came to see that it might not be easy for him to prevail, but he persisted, the more so that the King of England, for whose neutrality he was paying a high price, might at any moment be driven into the coalition by the public opinion of his realm. Financial stringency began to make itself felt in France and poverty engendered revolt. Louis XIV ac-

Military events

The failure of Louis XIV

cepted the offer of mediation made to him by Charles II, and entered into negotiations with Holland (1675). They were long and laborious, owing to the opposition of the Prince of Orange. They ended, however, on the 10th of August, 1678, in the treaty of *Nimwegen* which concluded peace with Holland. Other conventions completed the work, with Spain (1678), with the emperor, with Brandenburg, with Denmark (1679). Louis XIV had not destroyed Holland as he had proposed to do in 1672; he had failed to acquire the Spanish Netherlands, though he had obtained Franche-Comté and a certain number of strongholds such as *Valenciennes*, *Condé*, *Cambrai*, *Aire*, *Saint-Omer*, *Ypres* and others in the north of the kingdom. He had also had the satisfaction of holding his own against a large part of Europe and of having restored to his ally, Sweden, all that she had formerly lost. He thus assumed all the airs of a victor. He convinced himself that he had actually gained from the war and fully deserved the name of *Great*, which the municipality of Paris had decreed him. This conviction affected him most disastrously, not only because it did not correspond to the facts but because it incited him to undertake new and extremely imprudent enterprises.

Treaty of Nimwegen (1678)

The king's illusions; their danger

D. *The "réunions"; war of the League of Augsburg*

The annexations in the time of peace

In a time of complete peace, he perpetrated sundry annexations, designated "*réunions*," under pretext of reuniting territories of his own various former dependencies, villages, towns or castellaries. This operation, ostensibly authorised by legal decisions, took place in Franche-Comté, in Alsace, in Lorraine itself, which Louis XIV had held in sequestration since 1670, having had strong reasons for dissatisfaction with the Duke Charles IV. These violent and arbitrary measures provoked protests from the *Diet of the Empire*. The king took no notice, and, in 1681, he "reunited" the imperial city of Strasbourg contrary to its own wishes. Soon after, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) exasperated every Protestant prince. The demeanour of Louis XIV, that of a master of Europe, and a master, moreover, very quick to take offence, became unbearable. Discussions, which had been long in progress between his adversaries, ended in the formation of a league against him at Augsburg (July, 1686). It comprised the emperor, Spain, Holland, Sweden and a large number of German princes. A little later, the unexpected elevation of William of Orange to the English throne, following the Revolution of 1688, added greatly to the strength of the coalition. The new king had never ceased to search out enemies for Louis XIV, whom he held in detestation, and he became the natural centre of opposition to France. Above all, *the only two countries in Europe which were really wealthy,* and capable of bearing the strain of a long war, England and Holland, *were henceforward under the authority of one man.* At the same time the kingdom of France seemed to be almost worn out.

The League of Augsburg (1686)

William of Orange, King of England (1688)

From this coalition emerged a war which is known as the *War of the League of Augsburg* (1688-1697). It developed, with alternating successes and reverses for Louis XIV, on the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Netherlands, in Ireland and on the sea. France had already begun to grow too weak for so severe a struggle, when the imminent raising of the question of the Spanish succession caused William of Orange to desire peace. This he almost compelled his allies to agree to, and Louis XIV, who was in sore need of it, accepted conditions which turned out to be far more favourable than he could well have hoped for. The peace was signed at Ryswick, not far from the Hague, in several treaties (September-October, 1697). The King of France restored Lorraine and all the territories annexed by him since 1678, except Strasbourg. Though compelled to accept the lot of a loser for once, his pride was no whit abated.

The war (1688-1697)

The treaties of Ryswick

The death of Charles II of Spain, which occurred on the 1st of November, 1700, brought Louis XIV face to face with a formidable alternative. The invalid prince had now passed

E. *The succession of Charles II of Spain*

The question

away, who, in the phrase of a historian, had taken twenty years to die; his heirs had had ample time in which to make their dispositions. They were foreigners: the chief being Louis XIV, acting in the name of the *second* of his grandsons, in order to run no risk of confusion between the two crowns of France and Spain; the Archduke Charles of Austria, son of the Emperor Leopold I; and the Prince Elector of Bavaria, grandson of the same Leopold. It might be thought that the best course would have been to divide among them the immense dominions of Spain, a solution agreeable to the maritime powers, England and Holland. For this reason, William of Orange had made with Louis XIV several agreements to secure its adoption. But the interest of the Spanish monarchy was clearly against partition; and for this reason Charles II up to his latest hour had done what he could *to link the whole of his heritage together*. His choice had first fallen on the little Prince of Bavaria, whose personal power could give offence to none; unfortunately the child predeceased him (February, 1699). For some time he hesitated between the Austrian and the Frenchman, pulled on both sides by opposing intrigues. Finally, when death surprised him, he had just made a will in favour of the Duke of Anjou, second grandson of Louis XIV.

Solution by a partition

The will of Charles II

The hesitation of Louis XIV

What was the latter to do? To keep the engagements that he had made with William of Orange in the interest of European equilibrium, to sacrifice to a slight hope of peace the dream of Mazarin and himself?[4] Or was he to revoke his plighted word, accept the will and raise Europe against him which had no more desire for the hegemony of Bourbons than for that of Hapsburgs? If, however, he did not accept the will, Charles of Austria, who was to take the place of the Duke of Anjou under Charles II's will, in event of refusal by the King of France, would himself accept the heritage, and war would be needed to compel him to content himself with the part assigned to him by the treaty of 1698; war with Spain would also be needed to compel her to submit to the partition, which she disliked. Finally, the last wishes of one king should have weight with another, a point not to be neglected. A secret council was held by Louis XIV, in which opinions were divided, each view finding supporters. The king was undoubtedly struck by the view of Torcy who said that "*it was better to make war for the whole than for the part*"; that is to say, for the whole of the heritage offered rather than for the part granted to the Duke of Anjou by the treaty of 1698. Louis XIV was also impressed by the argument of the chancellor, Pontchartrain, who asserted that the will of the King of Spain should have precedence over engagements made in relation to the maritime powers. However this may have been, the will was accepted.

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[4] The last of the treaties concluded between the two kings left to the French claimant Naples, Sicily, the *Presidios* of Tuscany and Guipuscoa on the southwestern frontier of France (October 11, 1698).

He accepts the will

William of Orange thought that he had been played with and felt extremely resentful; nor did either the explanations advanced by Louis XIV in justification of his decision, or the trend of public opinion in England and Holland, which urged him to accept them, suffice to appease him. The King of France was indeed showing extreme imprudence. It may be that, intoxicated by the unhoped-for realisation of the great plan of his reign, he had reverted in full to the overweening arrogance of his early youth. He declared that he would maintain the eventual rights on the crown of France for his grandson, the conduct of whose affairs he took provisionally in hand; finally he had the "barrier towns" [5] occupied by French troops. It was quite possible to adduce justification for these different measures, but Louis XIV was not in the

Irritation of William III

The imprudence of Louis XIV

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[5] This was the name given to eleven strongholds in the Spanish Netherlands running from the Escaut to the Meuse which were intended to act as a *barrier* for Holland against France; the Hollanders had regularly maintained garrisons in them since the treaty of Ryswick. Louis XIV had seven of them occupied.

habit of doing anything of the sort; he thus antagonised those whom he should have taken pains to reassure. On his own side he was annoyed by the demands made by England and Holland in return for their neutrality. The emperor armed and gathered the princes of the Empire about him; he had neither accepted the treaty of partition of 1698 nor the will of Charles II. He drew Denmark and Sweden to his side. William of Orange induced England and Holland to join this coalition (September, 1701). One last deed of Louis XIV turned English opinion finally against him. William III had no child; the king promised James II, the dispossessed Stuart, whom he had received at the château of Saint-Germain, and who lay there at the point of death, to recognise his son as the heir of the English throne, and this indeed he afterwards did!

Formation of the coalition (1701)

The principal adversaries of Louis XIV

William III soon died (March 19, 1702), but he left the *Grand Alliance* well organised and three good men to lead it: Heinsius, *Great Pensionary*, that is to say first minister of Holland; the Duke of Marlborough, who had learnt war in the school of Turenne, and Prince Eugène of Savoy, son of a niece of Mazarin, who, formerly undervalued by Louis XIV, had passed into the service of Austria, and was also a general of the highest talent. The parts are reversed: the most remarkable men are no longer those on the French side, where, however, Catinat, now an old man, Vendôme, Berwick, a nephew of Marlborough, and above all, Villars still played their parts efficiently.

The war of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714)

The war begun in 1701 by the emperor in Italy, became extended in 1702 and was to last till 1714. It involved the division of the French armies between Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and even Spain. *It was very hard and generally unfortunate.* In 1707, indeed, an Austrian-Piedmontese army invaded Provence and besieged Toulon for five months. The misery of the French people became appalling and the king himself was obliged to send his gold plate to the Mint. The terrible winter of 1709 added a frightful destruction of life in the realm to the evils of the war, by frost as much as by famine. It caused the death of more than 30,000 people in the province of the Ile de France alone.

The king constrained to demand peace

Louis XIV found himself reduced to the humiliation of *asking twice for peace* and, necessary though it was to his subjects, he was obliged to forego it, so hard were the conditions that his enemies proposed to impose. A perusal of the text of the protocol then known as the *Preliminaries of the Hague* (May 29, 1709) will show how greatly the allies desired not only to take from the Duke of Anjou, now Philip V, the whole of the heritage of Charles II, but also to deprive Louis XIV of all conquests made since the beginning of his reign, including Alsace. The king and his subjects had no further choice after this avowal of their adversaries' real intentions: they could have no doubt that they were henceforward fighting for the very existence of France.

1. Negotiations at the Hague

2. Negotiations of Gertruydenberg

Dissensions within the nation gave way to the peril that threatened it from without; yet, after some desperate efforts marked by the bloody battle of *Malplaquet* (between Mons and Valenciennes) lost by Villars (October, 1709), it became necessary to open negotiations (in Gertruydenberg) afresh and to face claims which had now been increased: the allies demanded, as a prerequisite of any negotiations, that the old king should undertake to expel his grandson from Spain. The conversations were broken off (March, 1710) and the war was resumed, to be less uniformly unfortunate but more and more burdensome to a realm which was now at the end of its strength.

General fatigue. Advances from England

Most fortunately, the allies were also exhausted and an incident which occurred in the English court intervened in favour of Louis XIV; the Duchess of Marlborough, until then a great favourite of Queen Anne, fell into disgrace. She involved her husband in her fall and with him the whole of the ministry. The new ministers desired peace and opened separate negotiations with France (January, 1711). It was her salvation. Despite the efforts of Holland and the Empire, the preliminaries of a peace between France and England were signed on the 8th of October.

Death of Joseph I: Charles of Austria, emperor

At the same time too (April 11, 1711), the Emperor Joseph I had died, the new emperor being his brother, the Archduke Charles, the pretender to the throne of Spain, though indeed Spain would have nothing of him. If he entered into possession of the heritage of Charles II, he would thus unite the two branches of the house of Austria and reintegrate the Empire of Charles Quint! Neither England nor Holland viewed this eventuality with more pleasure than France. For this reason the Hollanders, in their turn, though with ill-grace, consented to the opening of a Congress in Utrecht (January, 1712). Negotiations, however, did not stop hostilities, at least with the imperial forces, whose general-in-chief, Prince Eugène, was watching his chance for a decisive victory, which might open to him the valley of the Oise and the road to Paris. The victory came, but it was Villars who won it at *Denain*[6] (July 24, 1712), annihilating at the same time the hopes of Prince Eugène. A series of conventions and treaties, the first of which took place in November, 1712, made up the diplomatic whole known as the *treaties of Utrecht*. A year more of hostilities was needed to induce the emperor to sign the treaty of *Rastadt* (March 7, 1714), and the Empire that of *Baden* (in Argovie) on September 7. Peace was restored to Europe.

The Congress of Utrecht (1712)

The victory of Denain

The treaties (1712-1714)

Their consequences

The peace confirmed the principle of partition of the Spanish monarchy conformably to the interests of the maritime powers. Philip V relinquished to his Austrian rival Italy —less Sicily, given to the Duke of Savoy—and the Netherlands. France ceded Acadia and Newfoundland to England, who found in the treaties the final confirmation of her supremacy upon the seas.

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[6] In the department of the North in the arrondissement of Valenciennes.

Conclusion

On final audit, the ambitious policy of Louis XIV had resulted in total failure. He could legitimately have sought to secure safety, completion and unity for his kingdom, but he had gone far beyond these aims in attempting to subordinate all Europe to himself. The forces at his disposal had failed him and he had achieved by the end of his enterprise only humiliation and ruin. Nothing now remained standing of the magnificent edifice erected by the diplomacy of Mazarin. The Austrian peril was undoubtedly done with, now that a French prince reigned at Madrid; so effectually indeed that Louis XIV, in the last months of his life, was thinking of an alliance with the emperor to strengthen himself against a power which he knew was now well on the way to become preponderant in Europe: England. This was in fact the most visible result of this long period of political agitation and of war, which we have now briefly recounted. It had prepared and determined an English hegemony.

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CHAPTER XXIII

THE DECADENCE OF ABSOLUTE MONARCHY. THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV (1715-1774)

The situation in 1715

Reform necessary, but impossible

LOUIS XIV had left France in ruins and the royal finances embarrassed, not solely because his personal expenditure was extravagant and ill-regulated, but also because his government, on the test of experience, worked badly and was based on defective principles. The *service* of a king, set high like a divinity above all criticism and control, could not but be rife with rampant abuses; these explain the accumulated hatred of the people for their aged monarch in the last years of his reign.

Many men, by this time, were enlightened and openminded enough to recognise what was wrong, to investigate causes and to seek for remedies. Among these were several who attained ministerial rank under Louis XV (1715-1774) and under Louis XVI before the Revolution; that is, from 1774 to 1789, and who attempted to effect more or less drastic reforms. They all failed, because those who wielded real executive power and effective influence in public affairs, the men of the court and of the bureaucracy, declined to admit the vices of the system and still less to alter them, since, as far as they could see, it was to their interest to maintain them, and they did not themselves suffer from them.

For this reason the political and social conditions of the country became less and less satisfactory to the body of subjects whom they overburden, and the Revolution became inevitable. The governmental machine constructed by Louis XIV was still in itself far from perfection, considered merely as an apparatus for carrying its own principles into effect. It gained nothing in coherence and in power of functioning automatically during the following three-quarters of a century. Even the attempts at modification and improvement which were applied to it on various occasions were hurtful; they disordered it, and furthered its ultimate disintegration.

The will of Louis XIV

Louis XIV without, however, it seems, many illusions as to his chances of being obeyed after his death, had in his will laid down an organisation for the government which was to administer the kingdom in the name of the little Louis XV, then a child of five years old. The child's nearest remaining relative was *Philip of Orléans*, his great-uncle, and it was to this prince that the regency would naturally have been entrusted; but Louis XIV thought otherwise. He had neither affection nor esteem for his nephew; he had not ventured to exclude him from the government, but he admitted him merely to the presidency of the Regency Council, whose composition he had worked out in full detail himself, and upon which he had conferred all real authority, with the right of nominating to all offices, functions and dignities. The supervision of the king's education and the command of the household troops were entrusted to the Duke of Maine, the late king's son by Madame de Montespan, who had been legitimatised with others. Philip, much occupied with his own pleasures, would possibly have accepted this slight, but he was in the hands of a group, who, after the death of the Duke of Burgundy, had counted on his accession to power to enable them to reorganise the State in their own way. They overcame his indifference, and, urged on by them, he succeeded in obtaining from Parliament a free hand in the appointment of the Council of Regency (September 2), while the High Court, only too happy to recover some political importance and to retaliate for the subservience in which Louis XIV had kept it, broke the will of the late king (September 12). In return, it was granted the

The will of the late king broken by Parliament right of remonstrance, and began to regard itself as at last rising from its abasement and regaining its position in the State.

I

The Regency (1715-1723)

A. *The regent*

The man who then became, for eight years—until the majority of the king—the master of France, was highly intelligent, extremely cultivated and well informed on politics and finance, capable of doing excellently if he wished; but, as his mother said of him in pleasantry, "*he had received all gifts from Heaven except the gift of using them.*" He was lacking in decision, firmness, perseverance and application: above all, debauchery occupied and made barren the greater part of his time. He was at most a man of *velléités*, of beginnings which ended in nothing.

The reaction against constraint and gloom

He began by lending himself to the natural reaction which followed the morose constraint of the last years of Louis XIV. A frenetic appetite for pleasure in every possible form became manifest, as is commonly the case after periods of pain and anxiety. Then began what Voltaire called "*the time of the amiable Regency.*"

Où la folie, agitant ses grelots,
D'un pied léger courut toute la France,
Où l'on fit tout, excepté pénitence.

When folly, shaking her bells,
Ran light-foot over France,
And men did everything except penance.

B. *The political views of the aristocratic party*

Unfortunately, amusement and diversion were insufficient to overcome all the disorder of every kind which was the legacy of the preceding reign. It has already been pointed out that, during the period of the Great King's decline, some nobles, who endured with little patience a régime in which all authority was vested in a bourgeois bureaucracy, had, first, under the inspiration of Fénelon, preceptor to the Duke of Burgundy, then under that of Saint-Simon, drawn up a plan for reform of the State. Their principal intention had been to free themselves from the tyranny of ministers and to acquire for the aristocracy the share of influence in the government to which it believed itself entitled, in virtue of the old customs of the realm. The basic principle of this reorganisation was to replace the ministers and secretaries of State by *councils of nobles;* for which reason the system was called *Polysynodie.*[1] With it the regent made an experiment.

The *Polysynodie*

He had seven councils: *Regency; Home Affairs; Church Affairs; War; Navy; Finance; Foreign Affairs.* In December, a *Council of Commerce* was added. In principle, each consisted of ten members. Actually, their presidents had been chosen with discrimination and the regent had taken care to leave room, in each council, for former ministers of Louis XIV, and for professional administrators to counterbalance the incompetence and deficiencies of many councillors, drawn from the nobility of the sword. So the failure of the experiment which lasted no longer than three years (till September, 1718) was not primarily due to the defective composition of the councils. Undoubtedly, their smooth working was impeded by quarrels as to precedence, which arose between members drawn from *the robe* and the nobles; the latter's inexperience added to the difficulties naturally incidental to the situation, but above all the conduct of business, whenever at all complex or delicate, comported ill with the tergiversations inherent in discussions between men so unequal in competence. The delay of the councils in decision and execution soon made them unpopular, and the nobles, disappointed, ceased to take interest. By September, 1715, Saint-Simon himself had lost his early confidence in the good that they were likely to do. Pos-

It works badly

Its failure

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[1] This is a word of Greek composition which means *many councils.* The paternity of this experiment is sometimes attributed to a certain *Abbé de Saint-Pierre* (1658-1743), who was fertile in ideas which were new and, for the times, unusual. He had published, for instance, in 1713, a *Plan for perpetual peace.* He proposed also to reduce the number of monks and to permit the marriage of priests. He may not have been the inventor of the *Polysynodie,* but he was at any rate its apologist in 1718.

sibly it might have been well to admit their failure from that time if Parliament had not attacked them—as a prelude to the far from intelligent opposition which it was to maintain throughout the reign by reason of its expressed horror for all innovations. The regent supported them to avoid the appearance of giving way to the *grandes robes* who were again becoming enterprising.

C. *The financial embarrassment*

The councils had discovered no remedies for the ruin of the finances and for the deficit; they contented themselves with hand-to-mouth expedients: a revision of the State debts; the abrogation of sundry official posts, without returning the money paid for them; the institution of a *Chamber of Justice* which had but little success in attempting to make those dealers in money disgorge who were alleged to have taken advantage of the late king's need for money to rob him. The 4410 convictions obtained yielded scarcely 100,000,000 livres (though the penalties due amounted to more than 219,000,000 livres), because too many personages in high places sold their influence to the worst offenders that their penalties might be reduced. A few timid attempts at new kinds of taxation were not sustained long enough to give substantial results, and, altogether, the Council of Finance could do no more than cling to old methods, now shown to be insufficient: reduce the expenditure of the State, and effect a few economies.

The Chamber of Justice

The attempt of Law

His entry on the scene

His origin and general ideas

The regent then allowed the Scot, *John Law*, to venture upon an attempt to reconstitute the finances upon new principles. Law was less properly a theorist in finance than an adventurer in business; he was both enterprising and bold. Son of a gold-beater in Edinburgh, who also practised banking on a small scale in discount and exchange, he had early acquired in the paternal shop a taste and a turn for the management of money. Obliged by the event of a duel to quit England, he had proceeded to Holland, where his main financial ideas were determined by a study which he made of the mechanism of the old Bank of Amsterdam. They amounted to the following propositions: it is through work that money creates wealth; but money does not work to the best effect unless it circulates rapidly. The best medium of exchange, which is easy to handle and which embodies, in the smallest possible bulk, amounts as large as can be desired, is paper money. This has no value in itself, if it represents nothing behind it; it must therefore be based on production and stand on credit. The bank should be the purse of commerce and industry. Guaranteed by their labour, it gives them in return the means of action which they require.

His first stay in France

In the first years of the century, Law had attempted to obtain means for realising his ideas first in Scotland, and afterwards in England. Refused on both sides, he had come to France and there had repaired his fortunes by gambling. D'Argenson, the lieutenant of police, was not long, indeed, in being so impressed by his constant good luck at cards as to expel him from Paris, because "*he knew too much about games recently introduced by him into the capital.*" But in the gaming-houses of the town where "*il taillait le Pharaon*" (the Faro was dealt), Law had become acquainted with some familiars of the Duke of Orléans, and had been presented to the latter.

His plan for a State Bank (1716)

When Louis XIV died, the pertinacious Scot returned to France, got into touch with the regent, and suggested to him the creation of a *State Bank* (1716). Establishments of this kind which existed in Europe, for instance in Amsterdam, London, Venice and elsewhere, were in the hands of private companies; the suggestion was therefore to transfer to the State, in France, the risks but also the profits of such an enterprise; profits which Law believed might be greatly increased when, State credit being well established, the State would be able to issue notes much larger in amount than the metallic currency by which they were guaranteed. The plan was dismissed

Reason for its dismissal

by the council. Its novelty occasioned surprise and alarm; above all it seemed to involve a danger which Saint-Simon ingenuously admits in these words: "*An establishment of this kind may be good in itself, but it can be so only in a republic or in a monarchy like that of England, when the finances are ruled by those who provide them, who do not provide more than they please. But in a State which is light-minded, changeable, besides being absolute, such as France, the necessary solidity must be lacking since a king, and, under his name, a mistress, a minister, a favourite, still more any extreme necessity, such as occurred from 1707 to 1710, might break the bank, which would be too great and too easy a temptation.*"

His private bank

Law obtained, nevertheless, permission to found a private bank (May, 1716) which took the name of *General Bank* and was granted extensive privileges. It was soon doing excellent business on very sound lines. Its influence upon commerce, particularly commerce with foreign countries, was not long in making itself felt in a favourable manner. Encouraged by this first success, Law sought for another far wider in scope.

The *Compagnie d'Occident*

The association of the Bank and of the Company

The financier Crozat, having relinquished a concession to exploit *Louisiana*,[2] which he had obtained, the Scot took it over and formed a shareholding company for its development. This was the *Company of the West* or of the Mississippi (August, 1717). By the following month a monopoly to exploit Canada was added.

The Company could not reasonably expect to make any large profit for a long time; it had to find colonists and capital in order to organise a real development of the American territories. The 100,000,000 livres which formed its capital, having been cashed in State notes, which were practically 70 per cent below their nominal value, gave them only very restricted opportunities for activity. Law first thought of

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[2] This was the name given to the great plain through which the Mississippi runs without otherwise defining its limits.

The "System" of Law

associating the bank with the Company,[3] the credit of the former would support that of the latter, pending the realisation of assets; then he offered the shares of the Company for sale, like a real commodity, subject to the law of supply and demand, whose price might rise indefinitely with the confidence felt by the purchasers in the prospect of eventual dividends. The calculation was not a bad one, but by letting speculation loose without providing any means of regulating it, Law was preparing his own ruin.

Speculation

Frenzied speculation in the shares of the Company developed, and the Rue Quincampoix, in which were situated the offices of most of the brokers, was suddenly besieged by fevered crowds, and became in a moment the speculative centre of all Europe. It was estimated that 500,000 foreigners were in Paris by the end of 1719, attracted thither by the hope of making their fortunes. The madness was contagious. Paper came to stand at a premium over gold and enormous fortunes were made in a few days by the dangerous game of buying for a rise.[4] Unfortunately there was nothing whatever to justify the rise of a share of 500 livres to 15,000 or 20,000 livres, beyond an unfounded confidence in the immediate payment of miraculous dividends, which neither would nor could be forthcoming.

Extension of Law's enterprise

Law encouraged this insensate rise, but did his best to enlarge his real business. He not only made great exertions to put his plans for colonising Louisiana into practical effect, but he acquired successively the monopolies of tobacco, of coining money, and of raising the leased imposts attached to the *Fermes* (leases) as they were called (in August, 1719), that of maritime commerce, of amalgamating under the Company trade with the West Indies, China, Africa, Guinea and others. Meanwhile the *General Bank* had become the *Royal Bank* (December 4, 1718), an essentially unfortunate proceeding, for the King's Council reserved to itself the right of regulating the output of notes, which only too evidently involved much risk of disastrous inflation. How great, in any case, must have been the temptation, for men so little acquainted with the delicate mechanism of credit, of an indefinite creation of money—or at any rate its apparent creation, by recourse to the printing-press. The General Bank had issued no more than 12,000,000 livres in paper; by March, 1719, the Royal Bank had already put 71,000,000 livres into circulation. The Scot even succeeded in having the Controllership-General of the Finances re-established in his favour (January 5, 1720), which gave him command over all movements of money throughout the kingdom. But the *System* was already in sore straits.

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[3] This union of the two is known as *the System of Law.*

[4] A lady of Namur, brought to Paris by a lawsuit, won 100,000,000 livres in the Rue Quincampoix; a servant of the broker Tourton pocketed 50,000,000 livres; a simple Savoyard, a messenger and polisher of floors, made 40,000,000 livres out of the business. A little hunchback who offered his back as a desk to the speculators made in this manner, it was said, 150,000 livres.

The failure of the System

Some prudent speculators had taken care to realise their profits by purchasing houses, land, silver goods, jewelry—whatever might in itself represent real and permanent value. Others, and in this the greatest lords gave an example, sold their shares in the Company and proceeded to cash, at the bank, the notes which they had received in payment. Law understood perfectly that, if this procedure became general, bankruptcy must follow, the metallic reserve at the bank being much less in amount than its issue of notes. This was so much the case that as soon as the payments made for notes promptly cashed by the Prince of Conti and the Duke of Bourbon became known, there was a fall in the shares, highly disquieting to the Rue Quincampoix. Law, overlooking the great principle that credit rests upon confidence, and that confidence can not be created by decree, took a series of steps by authority, which only served to precipitate his ruin: limitation to 500 livres of the metallic currency to be held by any one person; seizure and replacement by paper of the metallic deposits in the banks; prohibition of the sale or purchase of gold or silver work; forced circulation of notes; finally prohibition of all circulation of metallic coinage of any kind. Besides this he fixed the price of shares in the Company at 6,000 livres and closed the *Bourse* of the Rue Quincampoix (March, 1720). But money went into hiding; speculation was restarted on the Place des Victoires; then in the gardens of the Hôtel de Soissons (on the site of the present Bourse de Commerce); and worst of all, confidence evaporated.

The panic (1720)

No measure taken was able to arrest the fall in the shares, or to prevent the bearers of notes from presenting them to be cashed. Every day an enormous crowd seethed in murderous struggle before the Bank, and winds of riot began to whistle through Paris.[5] Speculation in goods of prime necessity had raised the cost of living terribly and Law was unable to bring it down. At the end of his devices, Law withdrew from Paris (October) and then fled from France (December, 1720); he had lost his whole personal fortune.

The liquidation

By the 10th of October, an edict had warned the public that the notes of the Bank could no longer be received in payment after the 1st of November. This was failure, pure and simple; while the enemies of Law, the very men who had never ceased to attack him and to put difficulties in his way, were those chosen to liquidate the Bank, the notes of the State and the Company of the Indies, which the Bank had involved in its own ruin. The operation mainly consisted in a drastic reduction of all credits, bank-notes, and holdings in the Funds

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[5] Topical stanzas like the following were circulated:

Français, la bravoure vous manque,	Frenchmen, your courage is failing you,
Vous êtes pleins d'aveuglement,	You are full of blindness;
Pendre Law avec le Régent	Hang Law with the Regent
Et vous emparer de la Banque,	And make yourselves masters of the Bank,
C'est l'affaire d'un moment.	It can be done in a moment.

presented for *visa* to the liquidators. It was unjust, clumsy and dishonest, and thoroughly exasperated the people against the System (1721-1722).

Consequences of this exasperation

Nothing could have been more unfortunate. The passions aroused engendered inveterate suspicion of every new scheme for general financial reform, and the old ways of thought on the subject became deplorably consolidated. Saint-Simon had, in the event, shown himself a true prophet, and the thought even of any Royal Bank was abandoned.

General characteristics of Law's attempt: its results

It has been said that the System of Law was the first attempt at State Socialism in France. This is only superficially accurate, and in the sense that Law attempted to monopolise the means of production to the extent of his power. It is inaccurate in the sense that the Scot had never had any idea of State Socialism as a principle; that, on the contrary, he was, in principle, an advocate of the freedom of commerce. His efforts, at least from the economic point of view, were not so sterile as might be supposed; marine commerce, in particular, made a forward stride of great promise. Naturally such ardour in speculation, such a lust for instant lucre, were not without drawbacks of a moral order. There was an outbreak of mad luxury in Paris, a wild rush for immediate enjoyment, a formidable increase, too, in crime. Yet this turmoil subsided with the fall of the System. What remained was a certain change in the distribution of wealth, and also, above all, in that congeries of social and financial difficulties, which the System had been able to put out of mind for the moment, but in no wise to remove.

II

The first ministers of Louis XV

The majority of the king (1723)

The regency, of such fair promise in its first days, culminated in complete disillusionment by the time that the king attained his majority (February 16, 1723). The old tutor of the regent, the Abbé Dubois, already entrusted with the direc-

A. *The ministry of Dubois*

tion of foreign policy, became prime minister. He was a man of low birth,[6] for the rest well informed and intelligent, but greedy and unscrupulous. "*All the vices*," wrote Saint-Simon, who detested him, "*battled within him for the mastery*." This is undoubtedly a partial and sweeping criticism, which must be modified in view of the evidence; there is this much in it, that Philip of Orléans was fit company for Dubois. He flattered the Jesuits, and disquieted the Jansenists in the hope of being made cardinal, as he actually was (June, 1721), but in doing so he opened the door to the burning question of the application of the bull *Unigenitus*, with which the whole reign of Louis XV is to be afflicted.

Death of Dubois and of the Duke of Orléans (1723)

The new prime minister did not hold his post for long: he died on the 10th of August, 1723, and the regent was obliged to resume the power which he had been delighted to relinquish. He was stricken in his turn by apoplexy on the following 2d of December.

B. *The ministry of the Duke of Bourbon*

The Duke of Bourbon succeeded him. He was great-grandson of the Great Condé, and a man without intelligence, haughty and harsh. During his ministry, authority in the State was largely in the hands of the financier, Paris-Duvernay, man of confidence of Madame de Prie, mistress of the duke. He did far from well, and the violent and useless measures he took in order to fill the king's treasury, to bring down the cost of living, and to free the country from the perpetually increasing horde of mendicants, made his government extremely unpopular. A resumption of persecution, directed against the Protestants, in 1724, by which the duke thought to liken himself to Louis XIV, added one element of trouble the more to those of which the State had no lack already.

The marriage of the king and the fall of the duke

Elsewhere, the king's old tutor, Fleury, Bishop of Fréjus, who had imagined that he could govern under cover of the minister, having been ejected, was making ready to retaliate.

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[6] He was son of an apothecary or physician of Brive, in Limousin.

Bourbon, who did not overlook his proceedings, well aware of the influence exercised by the cardinal over the king, sought to assure his own standing with the young sovereign by marrying him to a princess who should owe her elevation to himself alone. Some excellent matches were available, among them Elizabeth, daughter of Peter I, Czar of Russia; the duke and Madame de Prie chose Mary, daughter of Stanislas Leczinski, the dethroned King of Poland. She was healthy, pious, well informed and sweet-tempered, but not beautiful and seven years older than Louis XV (1725). She was unable to gain any ascendancy over her husband, and all her good will towards the duke did not prevent Fleury from achieving his disgrace and exile (June, 1726). She could do nothing but weep, which she did.

C. *The ministry of Fleury (1726)*

Character of the minister

Fleury, who was then appointed minister, had advised the king to do without a prime minister and to govern by himself, in imitation of Louis XIV. Under cover of this fiction, the cardinal was master.[7] He was lacking neither in ability nor in experience, but he was seventy-three, and showed no disposition to undertake any drastic reforms. Indeed, he lacked the strength of character which would have been needed to impose them. He was economical by nature; a great quality, certainly, but one which would only have enabled him to succeed in balancing his budget if he had had a long period of peace to work in; but this was denied him by circumstances. He never succeeded in protecting himself from the Farmers-General who robbed the State and oppressed the people.

His work

Orry, the most remarkable of the Controllers-General of the Finances, who successively held this post under the ministry, was honest and exact, but a man of routine, obstinate and limited; he could never throw off the coils of the old fiscal procedure whose ineffectiveness had already been thoroughly demonstrated. There was, however, under Fleury, a material revival of maritime trade and foreign commerce. It appears that the exchanges of France *quadrupled,* or nearly so, between 1716 and 1743. This was a result not to be despised, but it was by no means sufficient to dispel the poverty which inflicted cruel hardship, at any rate, on the country folk of the time. This proved how wholly factitious was the prosperity of business and what drastic changes were called for in the social economy of the kingdom.

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[7] He received the red hat in August, 1726.

Religious affairs (1726-1732)

Jansenist resistance, encouraged by Parliament, to the application of the bull *Unigenitus,* caused sufficiently serious trouble between 1726 and 1732. The population of Paris made common cause with the magistrates, mainly because the latter obstructed the king. The magistrates, in their turn, enheartened by this support, proceeded, under an outward show of profound respect, to oppose the king himself, and revived their old political pretensions. The excitement produced by this quarrel ended in an outburst of almost religious madness, whose principal theatre was the churchyard of Saint-Médard; it was occasioned by alleged miracles worked on the tomb of a deacon named Pâris, who had died in the odour of sanctity in 1727. Scenes of pure dementia became common, men and women of all ranks fell into convulsions like those of epileptics and maniacs. The police closed the cemetery and a humorist wrote over the gate:

De par le roi, défense à Dieu *De faire miracle en ce lieu.*	The king decrees, that God must not Commit a miracle at this spot.

But the epidemic was not to be stopped by so little as this; it included every form of hysterical extravagance. Fundamentally, there were in France no signs whatever of political life but the reactions of men's consciences. Parliament sought to utilise these as a basis and a bulwark for its opposition; they evoked, side by side with the extravagances just mentioned, pamphlets and songs which gave the finishing stroke both to Fleury's popularity and to all respect for the government. At the same time, very many reasonable men, scandalised by the excesses of *rabies theologica,* displayed by Jansenists and Jesuits alike, deserted Church and faith altogether. No time ever saw such rapid progress in unbelief as that in which began to take root, about 1769—the cult of the Sacred Heart.[8] The old cardinal clung tooth and nail to power, whence an active coterie strove hard to dislodge him. Happily for him, the king was hard to move from his accustomed ways and had little liking for new faces. Fleury himself "*gobait tous les dégoûts*" (swallowed all the mortifications) inflicted on him by his master's caprice. And thus he won the reward of death in his ministerial dignity on the 29th of January, 1743, at the age of ninety!

The end of Fleury (1743)

III

Attempts at reform

A. *The king and his entourage*

Louis XV, the man: his character and bent

Till then Louis XV had seemed to take no interest in anything but hunting and his hounds. Sickly and spoilt as a child, shy and silent as a youth, he seemed to have no special bent but for boredom. In particular, he felt no desire to be really king either then or when later on he arrived at man's estate. He had been satisfied to say to the aged Villars, who, in 1731, had tried to shame him out of his indolence, "*Tastes cannot be argued with.*" Though by no means devoid of intelligence and good sense, he remained indifferent to everything and hated to exert himself in any way. When we compare the testimonies of those who came closely in contact with him, we cannot avoid the conclusion that he was abnormal, subject to morbid preoccupations and an unexampled lack of affection, except towards his daughters. Handsome and brave, he might have been adored by his people, as indeed he was at first; he squandered and lost his popularity as though of set purpose, and ended by being execrated. He was deservedly reported to lead a life of scandalous debauchery. At first he had no liking for women, and his bashfulness on this point, made stronger by his religious devotion, was only overcome by a plot among those courtiers whose interest it was that he should have a mistress. They took advantage of the fact that the queen, prematurely aged by ten pregnancies, made no attempt to retain him, and they threw him into the arms of Madame de Mailly in 1733. Once started he never stopped, and descended by degrees to the lowest depths of debauchery.

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[8] It had been prepared by the *Life of Sister Marie-Alacocque,* by Langnet, Bishop of Soissons. The pope authorised the new cult in 1765.

His intermittent awakenings

He owed, moreover, to two of his mistresses, Madame de Châteauroux and Madame de Pompadour, a kind of awakening, which seemed, for some years, to recall him to his duties as king and enabled certain clear-sighted men to make an attempt to arrest the decay of the régime. After the death of Fleury, he announced, for a second time, his intention to be his own prime minister; but went no further than words to this end. Neither Madame de Mailly nor her sister, Madame de Vintimille, could induce him to take action, but *Madame de Châteauroux*, another sister of Madame de Mailly, was more fortunate (1742). Urged on by the Duke of Richelieu, and an equivocal intriguer called Madame de Tencin, she gave him no rest till he took an interest—or seemed to—in politics and affairs. She died too soon (December, 1744) to know how far this awaking of her royal lover had availed. *Madame de Pompadour*, who had succeeded to her place, did not at the same time continue her policy, though she had twenty years at her disposal (1745-1765); she exerted herself to acquire and keep a preponderant influence in the government rather than to awake the king to a sense of his duty. She was far more intent on inventing diversions to make him less incurably bored with everything than on inducing him to rouse himself from his apathy about State affairs.

Madame de Châteauroux

Madame de Pompadour

The choice of ministers

Louis XV took almost no interest in choosing his ministers, who were appointed or chosen through court intrigues, cabals and sometimes by bargains between private interests. The mistresses wielded an influence on this point which the ambitious were eager to conciliate. The growth of a party about each lady would be promptly balanced by that of an opposition coterie. The king saw what went on, but never exerted his authority spontaneously except at times when, weary of rivalries and petty embroilments, he lost patience for a moment. There is an end to the ministerial stability of the time of Louis XIV. Among those who followed one another in the control of affairs between the death of Fleury and the end of the reign, there were, however, three who brought to their tasks remarkable abilities and interesting ideas: *d'Argenson*, *Machault d'Arnouville* and *Choiseul.*

B. *The active ministers*

1. *D'Argenson* (1743-1757)

The Count of Argenson, thrust forward by the coterie which surrounded Madame de Châteauroux, had become Minister of War in 1743. He worked marvels in the service, which he completely reorganised. Further departments were soon entrusted to him: posts, pensions, the theatre, academies, censorship of books, the general administration of Paris. To all he brought qualities of order and competence which made him appreciated. Even the king seemed to become attached to him and to give him the confidence of which he was usually so sparing. The minister kept in reserve, for the moment when he should become master of the whole government, a most interesting programme of reform. This programme could be embodied in a few significant words, but it was also pregnant with difficulties: administrative decentralisation, free trade, equality of all subjects before fiscal charges, followed by suppression of privileges in matters of taxation, abolition of the sale of offices and of caste privileges.

His programme

Obstacles to its realisation

Would he ever have been able to carry out these intentions, and so save the monarchy? It is hardly probable; it was a question of nothing less than the reformation of a whole society and the transformation of the entire spirit of the régime.

No minister could succeed in such an attempt unless with the support of a king resolute to uphold him in all ways—and Louis XV was no such king.

The fall of d'Argenson

D'Argenson made the mistake of setting Madame de Pompadour against himself by showing only too clearly his intention to restrict her to the rôle of lady-love to the prince; consequently, he agreed ill with his colleague, Machault, who was supported by the favourite. D'Argenson expected Machault's fall, but both ministers fell on the same day (February 1, 1757). His programme, which would have stirred up the court and all the privileged against him, remained a dead letter and a theorist's dream.

2. Machault (1745-1757)

His character and ideas

Machault came from a family of magistrates. He was the reverse of a courtier, with manners far from pleasant and even devoid of amenity, obstinate and headstrong; he seems to have been neither a man of exceptional mind nor of very high ideals, but he had intelligence, rectitude, probity and sound common sense. He became *Controller-General* in 1745 through the favour of Madame de Pompadour, and, still holding the same office, *Keeper of the Seals*, in 1750. When he came on the scene he was convinced that too many subjects of the king did not pay the *taille*, that those who paid were too heavily burdened, that the financiers, tax farmers and partisans robbed the State, and that the clergy had too great possessions both in land and in money. These conclusions came to lead Machault to a programme of reforms essentially resembling that of d'Argenson. He did not dare, or at any rate did not attempt, to put more than a few of these into practice. He put the lease of the direct taxes at from 92,000,000 livres to 101,000,000 livres. He then imposed a tax of *one-twentieth* upon the income of all subjects, endeavouring by appropriate investigations to secure himself against evasions: the clergy, commonly skilful in obtaining exemption on good terms from all such personal taxes, were to be strictly obliged to pay this one (1749). In the following

His attempts at reform

year an edict was put forward with the object of regulating *mainmorte*,[9] under which any increase accruing to Church property was to be submitted to the king for authorisation, preceded by a careful enquiry, while at the same time any natural heirs who considered themselves injured by a testamentary disposition in favour of the Church could appeal against it.

Opposition encountered by him

These simple measures raised a tempest against the minister. The dealers in money began to hate him. Parliament protested against the twentieth on the ground of the poverty of the people; various Provincial States, particularly those of Languedoc and Brittany, followed this example on the ground of their rights and privileges. Above all, the Assembly of the Clergy made a strong resistance on the ground of its time-honoured immunities, and this was the starting-point of a hot polemical controversy in which the caustic and spirited wit of Voltaire took part. At first Machault held his own: he had convinced the king, and Madame de Pompadour was on his side; but the *party of the devout* which wielded the influence of the daughters of Louis XV, of the court prelates and of d'Argenson himself began to besiege the monarch. Their assault was favoured by a crisis of religious fervour which came over Louis XV in 1751. Little by little he gave way, and ended by exempting the clergy from the twentieth (December). To avoid being totally disowned, Machault resigned from the Finances and took over the Navy (1754). He had finally failed.

He abandons his scheme

Attempt of Damiens and the dismissal of Machault (1757)

Two years later (January 5, 1757), a man of weak mind, named Damiens, desiring, he declared, to recall the king to his duty, succeeded one evening in approaching him and giving him a slight wound with a penknife. Louis XV thought himself doomed and asked for a confessor. The only confessor who could be found, a simple monk, insisted on the dismissal of the favourite; Machault took upon himself the task of telling Madame de Pompadour that she must go. She stayed, and by the next day the king, having regained his nerve, forgot his promise but she never forgave Machault for his remissness in her defence. Only after three weeks of importunity did she succeed in obtaining the minister's disgrace from Louis XV, accorded with regret but communicated to him on the 1st of February, 1757. On the same day the marquise obtained the dismissal of d'Argenson, making use of a letter alleged to be from him which he disowned and declared to be forged.

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[9] In principle, possessions of *mainmorte* (of the dead hand) were those which never changed the hand that held them since they belonged to *collective personalities* which never died. The possessions of the Church were in this category. They could thus be indefinitely increased without ever reverting to the common stock. Thus Church possessions did not either pay the ordinary taxes or the duties on transfer, since they never changed their owner.

3. *Choiseul.* Origin of his fortune

The Duke of Choiseul, a Lorrainer, who was first called the Count of Stainville, is the very type of a minister who has climbed by crooked ways. He is a creature of Madame de Pompadour, who rewarded him royally for having told her in time, by a breach of faith unworthy of a gentleman, about a liaison which was brewing between his sister-in-law, Madame de Choiseul-Romanet, and the king. The marquise, who took no umbrage whatever at her lover's *passades*, was greatly afraid, since she had begun to be no more than a habit with him, of being supplanted by some serious rival. The lady was dismissed from court while her accuser was given the embassy of Rome (1754), followed by that of Vienna, the most important of that time (1757). He was rich, having married the daughter of Crozat, the financier, and his sumptuous table, open to many guests, made him friends, and counterbalanced the offence given by a caustic and unkindly turn of mind and the indiscretions of an unbounded self-sufficiency. He had been able also to retain the good will of the favourite by delicate and precious presents at the time when he was in Rome, then the place of all places for obtaining good bargains in objects of art. He was never a man of the first rank, and he could never disengage himself from the circle of intriguers which had formed him and led him to fortune. Their outlook on the world remained his, and too often their spirit, but there is this to be said for him, that he applied himself seriously to whatsoever he took in hand.

His entry to the ministry (1758)

Services which he rendered to the *War Office* and *Admiralty*

Summoned to replace Bernis in the conduct of Foreign Affairs in 1758, he had the task of liquidating the adventure of the Seven Years' War. He then became State Secretary for War (1761) and for some years (1761-1766) Secretary for the Navy. In these posts he showed much energy, reorganising the administration of the army, its recruitment, discipline, equipment, training and, furthermore, reconstituting the fleet, stimulating the activity of the dockyards, introducing order throughout and even reviving the idea of creating for France a colonial empire which should take the place of that which England had just taken from her. The intention behind his efforts is clear: Choiseul was preparing a requital for the Seven Years' War, no very good way of retaining the favour of Louis XV, who desired no more wars.

Enemies and jealousies which he stirred up for himself

Hostility and jealousies did not spare the minister; circumstances increased their number and their influence.

Resumption of Jansenist agitation (1751-1758)

The Jansenist dispute had never been completely settled. Parliament still cherished its resentment against the Jesuits. The latter did not cease to battle with the adversaries of the bull *Unigenitus*. The least occasion was enough to revive hostilities, the more so that they gave free play to the fixed craving to oppose, which never left the Parliamentarians. From 1751 to 1758 there was warm work, certain bishops having decided that the sacraments should be refused to whosoever did not make formal adhesion to the *Unigenitus*. Multifarious incidents, some ridiculous and all violent, raised passions on all sides to a height which would surprise us more if we did not know how these religious questions had remained the only ones in which some liberty of discussion was still possible in the name of the rights of conscience. The king, alternately indulgent or severe, but always undecided, appeared to incline now to one party, now to the other, exiling the Parliament to Pontoise (1753), then the Archbishop of Paris, its adversary, to Conflans (1754). The battle raged throughout the kingdom in encounter after encounter, the Provincial Parliaments lending their support to that of Paris. An attempt at conciliation by the intervention of the pope was unsuccessful and one can hardly imagine how the affair, proceeding from complication to complication, and from extension to extension, would have ended if the attempt of Damiens had not come with a rush to bring calm all round and effect an apparent reconciliation, or at least a truce, in an outburst of loyalty, between the opponents (1757).

The affair of the Jesuits and the trial of Father La Valette

The calm was of short duration. In 1761 the commercial failure of a certain Father La Valette, a Jesuit who had traded in the Antilles and involved an important firm in Marseilles in his ruin, had resulted in a trial in which the whole Company of Jesus was implicated by the creditors of the father. The Jesuits lost their case and imprudently appealed to Parliament, which not only confirmed the sentence but took the opportunity of giving rein to its Jansenist rancour and proceeded to a detailed examination of the "Statutes and Constitutions" of the order. Thence was obtained material for an implacable indictment, incriminating the ethics of the order, in particular its indulgence towards regicides, which declared it to be eminently adapted to excite grave derangements in the State.

The case against the Jesuits

The decree of Parliament and the suppression of the Jesuits in France (1762)

In consequence, a decree was issued excluding the Jesuits from education and providing that their colleges should be closed. The king, as usual, hesitated, advanced in one direction, drew back in another, and finally let the Parliament do as it saw fit, which was to close the colleges (April 1, 1762) and to issue a fresh decree which suppressed the order within the jurisdiction of the court (August 6, 1762). The other Parliaments, except those of Flanders, of Franche-Comté, Alsace and Artois, followed the example set by that of Paris and condemned the Jesuits (February, 1762, to April, 1764). Louis XV accepted the position and ratified the sentence (November, 1764).

Resentment of the "devout party" against Choiseul

Choiseul had allowed this to be done rather than helped in the doing, but the "devout party" could not pardon him for not having prevented it. Had he desired to do so he undoubtedly could not have done it, for the Jesuits had stirred up many hatreds against themselves which may not have been quite just, but were certainly implacable: Jansenists, Gallicans, Philosophers had made common cause against them. And still further, public opinion, in all Latin countries, at that time was opposed to them.

Significance and general interest of the condemnation of the Jesuits

Undoubtedly they had somewhat abused the advantages which they had wielded for more than a century almost everywhere in the Catholic world and their power exacted its price. In other respects, their expulsion was in no sense a triumph for liberty of thought; for they were, in fact, at bottom less intolerant and less narrow than their Jansenist victors; but it opened the way to a reorganisation of the colleges, in which teaching was placed in the hands of a number of secular priests, more or less imbued with the liberalistic ideas of the Philosophers. It is no indifferent matter that the generation, which was to attain man's estate about 1775 to 1780 and to make the Revolution, escaped the discipline of the merely formal education given by the Jesuits.[10]

The cabal of the court against Choiseul

The death of Madame de Pompadour (April 17, 1764) had deprived Choiseul of his best support in the court. His enemies, those who envied him and those who looked to succeed him, did their best to discredit him with the king. That he came into conflict with the new mistress, whose name was *Madame du*

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[10] There were in the kingdom about one hundred Jesuit colleges which became royal and passed under the direction of *administrative offices* nominated by the king. A curious *modernisation* of educational programmes and methods thus resulted. Their success, however, fell short of the effort made.

Barry (1768), does not appear to be true, but he made no attempt to conciliate her, and his entourage pelted the parvenue with epigrams and rhymes which alienated and irritated the king. Maupeou, the Chancellor, the Abbé Terray, Controller-General of Finance, both ambitious and both unscrupulous, took advantage of this to undermine him with the monarch, the first representing him as a friend of the *long robes*—that is to say, the restless and turbulent magistrates whom Louis XV detested; the second, as an extravagant and incapable administrator. A prospective fear that he might plunge into the conflict which was about to open between Spain and England (summer of 1770) determined the king to demand his resignation and to send him into exile on his estate of Chanteloup (December 24). This unjust disgrace earned him great popularity, of which he was not altogether unworthy, if not for genius and width of outlook, at any rate for his brilliant intelligence, his energy, his enlightened patriotism, which put him far above those who had cast him down, and there can be little question, above all other ministers of Louis XV.

His disgrace (1770)

The same obstacle had impeded the three men just mentioned in their attempts at reform, attempts not uniform but fundamentally on the same lines; namely, the detestable organisation of society, in which those who profited by its injustice, the privileged orders, courtiers, bureaucrats, and Parliamentarians, alike, with equal selfishness and similar blindness, would do nothing but defend the rotten structure with their whole strength.

The failure of reform

IV

The end of the reign

A. *The Triumvirate*

Choiseul's successors were men who had been largely instrumental in his fall—the Chancellor, *Maupeou*, and the Controller-General of Finance, *Terray*. They were not without ability and talent, but they were faced by a difficult situation and their moral authority was small. They were generally held to be perfect products of the hotbed of shamelessness and dishonesty which the court had become. They took to themselves a third, who seems to have been undoubtedly better than his reputation —which was abominable—whom they made Minister of Foreign Affairs though he knew nothing whatever of the subject. This was the *Duke of Aiguillon*, also an enemy of Choiseul's, who came into power with a rooted hatred for the whole parliamentary world, because, when he was military governor of Brittany, he had become embroiled with La Chalotais, Procurer-General of the Parliament of Rennes, in a private quarrel which had finally degenerated into a conflict between himself and the Parliament of Brittany and then between that Parliament and the king.

Opposition which it encountered

The grouping of these three men, Maupeou, Terray, d'Aiguillon, received in their own time the name of the *Triumvirate.* The ill-will which they met with was not always justified nor enlightened. Their best exertions were taken amiss and, by the opposition which they aroused, contributed to throw somewhat still more into confusion the governmental machine which they were endeavouring to put into order. Nor did they always agree among themselves. D'Aiguillon intrigued against Maupeou, against whom he had a grudge for having defended him no better against the *robins*—the gentlemen of the long robe—in Brittany. Terray encouraged him in this proceeding, in which he saw profit for himself, the acquisition, for instance, of the post of Keeper of the Seals.[11] Louis XV amused himself, as far as he was capable of so doing, with the spectacle of his ministers thus manoeuvring against one another.

B. *The financial administration of Terray*

In the finances, Terray, driven to a policy of expedients, and even to a partial bankruptcy, obtained among other opprobrious nicknames that of *Vide-Gousset* (Pickpocket). He had nevertheless desired a more equitable distribution of the general taxes, the *twentieth:* he desired no less to diminish the burden borne by the tax-payers, owing to the abuses of the Farmers-General, by relieving the latter from the *croupes* or commissions, which they paid to influential personages to secure the renewal of their leases. But what indeed could be done, when the king, his daughters, the wife of the dauphin and Madame du Barry, among others, were among the largest beneficiaries by this corruption? The Controller could do no more than raise the price at which the Farms were leased in 1774. He carried it up to a price of 152,000,000 livres, an augmentation of three millions and a half over the previous adjustment (1768); but while the royal treasury may have benefited by this extra value, the subjects received no relief from it, indeed the reverse. Finally, when he attempted to reduce the price of corn by instituting, at the cost and charges of the State, provisionment on a large scale, in virtue of which, by a due adjustment of supply to demand, he hoped to regulate the market, he found himself accused of monopolising a vital trade to the profit of the king and of speculating in the poverty of the people.[12] It was as though public opinion could never forgive Terray for not having discovered some charm to choke off all the parasites who were gorged with the gold of the treasury, and to balance, in a turn of the hand, the State budget which had been unbalanced for over a century.

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[11] The Chancellor was irremovable, but he had authority only as Keeper of the Seals and the king could always deprive him of this dignity.

C. *Maupeou and his plans for reform of justice*

Maupeou, perhaps simply because Louis XV was tired out by the continually renewed opposition of Parliaments, perhaps also because he saw in their suppression, or at least in their reorganisation on a new basis, the full completion of absolute monarchy, the removal of the last theoretic obstacle to the omnipotence of the king, attempted an interesting reform. It consisted essentially in the suppression of the sale of offices, in the resumption by the prince of the direct nominations of the officials of justice—of the members of the higher courts to begin with—in prohibiting the practice of *épices;* that is to say, of presents which suitors were obliged to make to judges. The magistrates were to be regularly appointed, and their judicial independence was to be secured by making them irremovable.

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[12] The predecessor of Terray at the finances, L'Averdy, an extremely honest man, had already become compromised without his own will or knowledge in a speculation in grain, ventured on by one of his agents, one Malisset, and had been accused by a certain Le Prevost de Beaumont of having concluded with certain speculators a *Famine Compact*—called thus in parody of the *Family Compact* negotiated by Choiseul in 1761, to unite all the Bourbon crowned heads in Europe. This earned its author twenty years in the Bastille: it contributed largely to create a legend which is not yet entirely extinct: that of Louis XV speculating on the rise in price of corn and starving his subjects to enrich himself.

Parliamentary opposition. Its character and signification

In the current debasement of all political life in France, the Parliamentarians were eager to pose as the last guard of resistance to arbitrary royal autocracy, as the one remaining support of the fundamental laws of the realm, as the embodiment of the will of the nation. And the longer the reign of the indifferent and vacillating king went on, the bolder they grew in the assertion of pretensions such as no autocracy could endure. In this way the *Great Robes*, ill-used by the prince, had made themselves to some degree popular. Yet the passions which urged them on had nothing popular about them; neither were their breadths of outlook nor their political sense, nor, in a word, their insight into the needs of the time, such as to qualify them to cure the malady which afflicted the realm, or to reform the political and social conditions which were its true cause. They formed a caste, keen to get on good terms with the noblesse by birth, and to be of equal standing—and likely in this to succeed—full of their own importance and their own privileges, above all fettered to the past and as alien as possible from all that we now call liberalism and tolerance. Had they been her masters, France might have been subjected to a tyranny no less incompetent, even more burdensome, and far more galling than that of the king. For these reasons, they were both detested and dreaded by the Philosophers, Voltaire, in particular, who had universally found them impenetrable to a new idea or a generous sentiment, and had reprehended the blindness and ferocious fanaticism which they had displayed in the famous trials of Calas, of Sirven, and of La Barre.[13]

The execution of the plan of Maupeou

On the 20th of January, 1771, Maupeou, giving as a reason the insolent obstinacy of the Parliament of Paris in taking part, though forbidden by the king to do so, in the irritating dispute arisen between the Duke of Aiguillon and the *Robins* of Rennes, sent all its magistrates into exile. Then, ignoring the remonstrances of the princes of the blood, disturbed at so great a revolution in age-long customs, he declared their offices confiscated and immediately redeemable. The Great Council, which had not much to do, after unsuccessful attempts to replace the dismissed magistrates by others, consented to become the Parliament of Paris and was reorganised to that end. The Chancellor, furthermore, divided the jurisdiction of the old Parliament among five Superior Councils of Justice, the Parliament properly so called remaining in charge of the business which concerned the crown and the peers and of the registration of laws and ordinances. With the same stroke he abolished the sale of judicial posts (edict of February 23, 1771).

The magistrates deprived of thei posts

Resistance extends reform

Resistance became manifest in January: all the Provincial Parliaments and the Court of Aids successively protested and made common cause with their colleagues of Paris. Maupeou had not perhaps hoped to make his reform general; he accepted this situation: he next suppressed the Court of Aids (April 9) and attempted to replace the Provincial Parliaments by Superior Councils. Owing to opposition by the other ministers and by the king himself, he sacrificed only the courts of Rouen and of Douai, but he undertook the reorganisation of the others in conformity with the general principles of his reform. He had much difficulty in recruiting a new staff.

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[13] The family of Calas living in Toulouse, Protestants, had been accused of having killed one of their members—who had in reality committed suicide—in order to prevent him from becoming a Catholic; the Parliament of Toulouse condemned the father of the unhappy man to execution in a brutal manner (1762). Voltaire achieved his rehabilitation in 1765. The Sirvens, at Castres, also Protestants, were implicated in a similar affair; one of their daughters who had become insane had thrown herself into a well. The Parliament of Toulouse in this case was more circumspect and allowed the local judges to decide the case. It did not disavow them until Voltaire had demonstrated and established the innocence of the accused (1767). The Chevalier de La Barre, a youth condemned for impiety on the order of the Parliament of Paris at Abbeville, underwent a horrible punishment in spite of the efforts made to save him by the Bishop of Amiens (1766).

Difficulties which he encountered

The old councillors, for the most part, refused to take part in the new organisation. Time, indeed, would have disposed of this difficulty. Nevertheless, the reform as a whole was fortunate, and was from the first approved of by the enemies of the Jansenists and Gallicans as well as by the Philosophers; the king himself regarded it with a kindly eye, for it freed him from a veritable nightmare, the parliamentary opposition. Such approbation was fair compensation for the libels which defamed the new courts and their founder, and might even in the end have made the caustic pamphlets forgotten, which Beaumarchais, having lost a suit which he expected to win by bribing the reporter, had the audacity to issue in 1773 and 1774 and which ridiculed the "*Parliament Maupeou.*" There is reason to believe that, if Louis XV had lived a few years longer, the Chancellor would have had the last word and that he would possibly have carried his other projects to completion; the simplification of the lower jurisdictions, the reformation of civil procedure, the introduction of order and unity into laws and customs.

Beaumarchais

Conclusion

The situation at the end of the reign of Louis XV

Had Maupeou been able to realise all his intentions—most praiseworthy as they were—they would not have brought, except in one respect, appreciable relief to the realm and the monarchy from the ills which they suffered. Clear-sighted men were perfectly aware of the dangers of the situation. "*We tinker up one wall of the house,*" wrote d'Argenson, "*while another tumbles down. . . . We are in the last stage of* *decay.*" Even the king and Madame de Pompadour were without illusions as to the probable duration of the régime and were conscious of the impending cataclysm. They merely persuaded themselves that things would last out their time. If things did actually last a little longer it was because *loyalty* to the king was still a potent feeling in France, and because public opinion had faith in the dauphin, the future Louis XVI, and above all because, in view of the strong position of the privileged orders, the forces of the malcontents, always incapable of unanimity or co-operation, were inadequate for action.

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CHAPTER XXIV

THE APPROACH OF THE REVOLUTION (1774-1788)

I

The march of enlightenment

LE progrès des lumières (the march of enlightenment), as the phrase then ran, had, however, made thinking men more and more restive under the disordered and tyrannical régime which was bringing ruin upon France, and making life hard for all except those who by birth or wealth were among Fortune's favourites. This progress issued from a twofold effort; that of the *Philosophers* and that of the *Economists*. The former, since the beginning of the reign of Louis XV, and especially since the middle of the century, had pondered and discussed political and social propositions, often highly daring in principle, compared with those officially held orthodox. The latter endeavoured to elicit from economic facts a theory of production and a discipline of labour in a society. An extremely active intellectual life, many sets (*les salons*) which met to propound and discuss ideas, a growing taste for the collection of facts, political and social, and their incorporation in vast doctrinal systems reveal a profound intellectual ferment, hardly at first sight congruous with the apparent levity, caprice, elegance tinctured with futility, and pursuit of epicurean pleasure currently thought to be characteristic of the French eighteenth century. The different social atmospheres must not be confounded nor the court taken as representative of France; it was rather her antithesis. It had much more influence upon the manners than upon the mind of the nation.

A. *The Philosophers*

The Philosophers differed much from one another in temperament and even in opinion, but were united by common

The origin of their ideas

tendencies and aspirations. The principles and sources of their thought were derived from the works of a French scholar and thinker, *Pierre Bayle*, who died in 1706,[1] and those of various English writers, notably *Locke*, who died in 1704, whose *Essay upon Civil Government* (1690) had already formulated the idea of *natural rights* pertaining to all men, that of the *social contract* and that of the *sovereignty of the people.* The English philosophers had likewise affirmed the existence, above all religious creeds, of a *natural religion* based on certain spiritual verities, acceptable to the reason of all men, as a consequence of which all religious intolerance should be repudiated. French philosophers applied these various propositions to the criticism of the political conditions of their country and attacked especially the domination of the Catholic Church.

The great nam

Montesquieu, in the *Lettres persanes* (1721) and the *Esprit des lois* (1748), *Voltaire* in the *Lettres philosophiques* (1733), the *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764) and a prodigious number of writings of all kinds; *Diderot, d'Alembert* and their numerous collaborators, in the articles of the vast repertory known as the *Encyclopédie* which appeared between 1751 and 1772;[2] *Rousseau* in the *Contrat Social* (1762) and others less well known today and with lesser gifts but with great influence on their contemporaries, sowed in abundance the seed of the new ideas.

The political ideas of the Philosophers

These men were in reality *neither republicans nor democrats.* Rousseau himself, theoretically a partisan of the sovereignty of the people and the equality of all citizens in the State, did not believe it possible that his ideas could be applied in his own time and entrusted them to the future. But they reprobated the abuses of absolutism; they no longer accepted the justifications of the right divine; they rejected the authority of the Church in political matters and advocated her subordination to the State. The greater number, partisans of natural religion and tolerance, seceded from Christianity, and several, such as Helvetius and d'Holbach, diverged even into atheism and materialism. What they desired, having followed with interest the interplay of English political life, was a *Monarchie organisée;* namely, a constitutional monarchy in which the king's authority would be controlled and moderated by representative bodies and in which the three powers, legislative, executive and judicial, kept separate and distinct, should, in harmonious equilibrium, work together in favour of freedom. They had no taste for the *canaille* and when they said the *people* they reminded themselves that the Latin tongue which had nurtured their youth was careful to distinguish *populus* from *plebs;* they cherished no dreams of a plebeian régime, but they desired that *honest men*—themselves and their friends, cultivated and reflective—should be free to think and write; they desired the equitable distribution of fiscal burdens and the proper regulation of the finances; finally they desired an end to arbitrary autocracy. Circumstances, of course, compelled them to be cautious and circumspect in the exposition of their ideas. Many of them would, no doubt, have been bolder in times more propitious to free thought; but the hesitations and timidities of their pupils who conducted the Revolution of 1789, when they found themselves in a position to draw due conclusions from the principles of their masters, their reluctance to accept the republic and the democracy prove, as far as appearance goes, that our Philosophers were still to some extent in the bondage of tradition and hypnotised by habit.

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[1] He wrote his principal works in Holland.

[2] The work was retarded and came near to suppression by the hostility of Parliament which declared it to be a *compendium* of evil doctrines prejudicial to the social order and to religion: Madame de Pompadour, Choiseul and Malesherbes protected and saved it.

Defects and errors in their doctrines

In other respects, it is clearly to be seen that they have not yet acquired an accurate appreciation or an adequate respect for facts ascertained by experiment, and that they have too much trust in abstract reason and constructive ratiocination. They are too fond of large theories, a little in the air, to which complex reality is less kind than docile foolscap. Their psychology and sociology were quite elementary. Their knowledge on all subjects was altogether less extensive and trustworthy than they thought, and this, no doubt, accounts for their simple faith that wise laws and well-made ordinances are enough in themselves to create institutions which will live and a national disposition to adopt them. Many mistakes of the Revolutionary Assemblies and, before them, of Turgot, had unquestionably no other cause than this simple and now astonishing faith.

B. ***The Economists***

The *Economists* were Philosophers who endeavoured to explain the origin of wealth and the natural laws which regulate its production and increase. These problems were of old date; in the time of Louis XIV, Vauban and Boisguillebert had based ideas of financial reform upon economic considerations; but it was not until the eighteenth century in England, as well as in France, that the first great theories on the subject were framed. They correspond to the political and social doctrines referred to above.

The commerci
school: Gourn

They differ among themselves. The *commercial school* of Gournay, son of a merchant of Saint-Malo, is mainly concerned with industry and commerce. It combated the drastic protectionism and the régime of coercion put in force by Colbert; and preached in its place the doctrine of freedom, the free play of *natural laws*, expressed in the famous formula: *laissez faire, laissez passer* (let be; let happen).

The physiocratic school: Quesnay

The *physiocratic school* of Quesnay, physician to Louis XV, also regards nature as supreme (which is the meaning of the word *physiocratic*), but alleges the soil to be the sole source of wealth, and affirms that only by leaving free play to the laws established by Providence, will the best results be obtained, in the total volume of trade and the due distribution of wealth.

C. *The enlightened despotism*

The Economists relied on the authority of the prince to impose their reforms and to free the country from financial parasites and profiteers by restrictions on trade. For these reasons they advocated an effective consolidation of the royal power, on the condition, of course, that it should be disposed to follow their suggestions. To this form of government has been given the name of *Enlightened Despotism.* It was fashionable among kings in the last part of the century.

General results of the movement of ideas

Altogether the Philosophers, in spreading their ideas among men who were interested, to whatever degree, in things of the mind and thought, were leading the way to a general intellectual emancipation and creating an atmosphere favourable to a profound political and social transformation. The Economists brought these same men to regard as discredited every principle upon which was based the economic exploitation of France by its governors. The very opposition which both aroused was more helpful than harmful to their cause.

D. *Opposition* Parliament

For opposition there was. First that of the Parliament whose narrow Jansenism was always reluctant to accept new ideas, particularly when these might be suspected of hostility to Christianity, and whose own pretensions to political influence made them distrustful of innovators with projects for reform. The Parliament feared, not without reason, for the reformers had little love for it, that their systems would hardly give it the place which it believed to be its due. Furthermore,

The "devout party"

side by side with the Parliament the "devout party" upheld by Queen Marie, by the dauphin, by the daughters of Louis XV, and supported by the Assembly of the Clergy [3] missed no opportunity of attacking the *impies* (misbelievers) and of soliciting the Sorbonne, Parliament and the King's Council for severities against them. The Council would yield to this pressure whensoever those who protected the Philosophers came to have less influence over the king, especially Madame de Pompadour and Malesherbes, who was *Directeur de la librairie*—that is to say, director of the censorship of books—from 1750 to 1763.

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[3] Since the sixteenth century, every ten years the deputies of the clergy of France in the proportion of four for each ecclesiastical province met together with the authorisation of the king to discuss questions that concerned them. They availed themselves of this occasion to declare their grievances to the prince, to submit their requests to him and suggest measures which they considered advisable.

Unsystematic character of
repression

The adversaries of the Philosophers commonly worked together: the devout would denounce some publication, the Sorbonne would follow with their reprobation, the Parliament or the Council would condemn, have it seized and destroyed; sometimes they would decree the arrest of the author and the printer. Their activities were, happily, unsystematic, and to a great extent spasmodic, and these repressions had little effective result. For instance, the *Encyclopédie*, stopped during the publication of its second volume by decree of the Council on the 7th of February, 1752, resumed printing by November, 1753, underwent a second attack followed by a second decree for suppression in 1759, and yet was finally completed in 1772; the government in spite of the interdict turned a blind eye to its continued publication.

Victory of
new ideas

But all prohibited books could not have such good fortune, and more than one writer had to take refuge abroad. Voltaire himself settled at Ferney, close to the Swiss frontier, that he might be able to retreat promptly, if danger threatened. On the whole, however, the defence was much weaker than the attack; public opinion was on the side of the Philosophers and supported them; they found partisans not only among the educated bourgeoisie but also among the young nobility, particularly after the expulsion of the Jesuits from the colleges—and even among the clergy. In 1770, Séguier, Advocate-General in Parliament, had publicly to admit that the advantage remained with the Philosophers. Their victory consolidated the habits of mind which they had originated, those of critical and free examination of institutions, traditions and beliefs; it justified their previous disrespect for persons as well as for things, which, under all the precautions of form which they had believed it prudent to take, had become the necessary condition of their exercise of free judgment. The real strength of the government lay in the ignorance and intellectual inertia of the masses, and in the fact that the nation was unconscious of itself, and still existed only potentially. A clear-sighted and firm will, wielding in the king's name the weapons which had gradually been forged by monarchic centralisation, a will which had faith in its own aims, might even yet, at the end of the reign of Louis XV, by effecting bold and radical reforms, retard the Revolution whose approach was quite plain to all of real insight.

II

The reign of Louis XVI from 1774 to 1788

A. The new king

Louis XVI,[4] who succeeded his grandfather, was twenty; heavy, awkward and shy, of slow and ill-cultivated intelligence, he seemed anything but qualified for the trade of king. Yet he was not devoid either of good will or of conscience and he had excellent points as a private individual; applied to public life these might have helped him to be a good ruler but for his fatal lack of energy and decision. This defect made him helpless before the antagonistic influences of the coteries and intrigues of the court. Capable of enduring that truth should be told him, and naturally inclined to follow advice which appeared to him conducive to his people's good, he could never uphold even the best of his servants against the attacks of blind and unscrupulous privilege.

The queen

The queen, Marie-Antoinette, daughter of Maria Theresa of Austria, pretty, gracious, witty, with some intelligence but quite ignorant, enamoured of pleasure and frivolous beyond words, capable of energy on occasion but also of extreme ob-

[4] He was born on the 24th of August, 1754.

stinacy, made most unfortunate use of her ascendancy over her husband to subvert any good resolutions which he might take and to discredit the reforming ministers in his eyes. She was to be the plaything of coteries who would abuse her indulgence and eat her out of house and home; that is to say, put the royal treasury to pillage.

B. *The ministry of Maurepa*

Turgot

The young king first thought it advisable to adopt the course of taking counsel with an old courtier, a wit, a trifler and a sceptic, the Count of *Maurepas*, who became prime minister. He first secured the dismissal of d'Aiguillon; next he discouraged Choiseul, who had hoped for a favourable turn of fortune. Finally, he appealed to the Minister of the Navy, *Turgot*. The new minister had just distinguished himself by his excellent administration in the intendancy of Limousin. He was of a good bourgeois family[5] which had been long in the king's service. He was a great worker, devoted to the public good and absolutely disinterested, but wedded to his own ideas and too impatient of contradiction. He impressed his opponents as contemptuous and ungenial, and he was indeed little inclined to take trouble to convert and convince those who did not share his opinions from the start. For a long time, at first in association with the Economists and in meditation upon their writings, afterwards in his practical experience in Limousin, he had been working out doctrines on economic, social and even political subjects; these he had embodied in a plan for reform. Maurepas who had secured his appointment to gratify the Economists and the Philosophers, was himself as little qualified as any man in the world to understand and to follow him.

His general idea

Turgot, indeed, proposed to go far. Not only was he, like his masters, an advocate of freedom in commercial and industrial questions, and thus an advocate of the suppression of all corporations, laws and regulations which clogged trade and competition, but he went further and proposed the abolition of all restrictions whatever on the liberty of man: a clean sweep of feudal rights, serfage, religious intolerance. He desired the complete secularisation of the State. The State Church must go; registration, public relief, education in all stages become branches of public administration. He contemplated, in fact, no less than the complete separation of Church and State! In politics he was of the school of *enlightened despotism*, but he believed that the king, supreme legislator and arbiter, should be surrounded by councils of the most competent and enlightened among his subjects. These, landed proprietors of the three orders, were to meet by *municipalities;* that is to say, in deliberative assemblies of three grades: *parochial, provincial* and *national.*

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[5] He was born in Paris in 1727. His father was Provost of the Merchants of the capital. He had begun by studying with the object of taking orders, but had become attached to the new ideas and had made friends with Gournay.

The support of the king

For any such plan to have a chance of success, it would be necessary for Louis XVI to make it resolutely his own, and never relax for a moment in a determination to yield nothing to its opponents; further, and above all, it would be necessary to remove from Turgot's path all obstructions which obviously might stand in his way. On the first point, Louis XVI gave his minister most handsome promises and solemn engagements. On the second, he began by doing the precise opposite of all that was advisable. On the 24th of August, 1774, he deprived Maupeou of the Seals and Terray of the Controller-Generalship of the Finances, which he gave to Turgot, but, yielding to Maurepas and to a tide of opinion which grew more and more averse to the Courts of Justice which Maupeou instituted, he recalled the Parliaments (October). This was an unfortunate inspiration; the new Controller-General was soon to feel its deplorable effects.

Recall of the Parliaments

The financial principle of Turgot

The diverse parts of Turgot's plan were interconnected, one being dependent on another; for this reason, he combined them in one, giving at first an impression that he was undertaking too much at a time. His financial programme was expressed in a phrase—*no bankruptcy, no increase of taxes, no loans.* This meant that expenses must be lowered and the yield of existing taxes raised, both by reform of the abuses which attended their collection, and by augmenting the national wealth. Turgot then began to economise, starting with himself and reducing his own salary; he asked of the king various sacrifices in his household expenditure, but was unable to obtain either any reduction in the pensions so liberally granted to courtiers, or the abolition of *orders on account;* that is to say, free gifts made by the king, without reason assigned, which came, in the course of a year, to a considerable sum. In other directions, the minister initiated a complete revision of the whole system of the tax on real property paid by the commoners (*taille*) and did his utmost to restrict privilege and the licence enjoyed by the Farmers-General. He prohibited *croupes* (commissions) and established State offices for the collection of a certain number of imposts. These various measures, inadequate as they were, enabled him to pay off half the floating deficit in 1775, and to secure a surplus in receipts of five million livres over current administrative expenses. As a set-off against this he had incurred the determined enmity of all courtiers and financiers.

The free circulation of corn: complications

By the 13th of September, 1774, an ordinance had authorised the free circulation of corn in the kingdom, and the importation of foreign grains. Economists, Philosophers and even producers applauded, but speculators, whose operations were interfered with, were greatly annoyed. Unfortunately the year's harvest had been poor; in the spring of 1775, bread became dear; the old tales were told of forestalling, exploitation, and famine; riots broke out in several places; even at Versailles and in Paris. Certain measures of repression were necessary. The whole is known as the *guerre des farines* (grain war). It seems probable that the enemies of Turgot had, if not incited, at least exploited and encouraged these disturbances. Parliament naturally ranged itself on the side of opposition to the minister.

The question of labour dues and that of corporations

The abolition of the royal labour dues (*corvée*) and their replacement by *a tax payable by all owners of land* (January, 1776) and, at the same time, the suppression of all incorporated guilds of masters and of sworn supervisors (*corporations, maîtrises et jurandes*), which was received with demonstrations of joy by peasants and workmen, exasperated a large number of the privileged, and seemed to others ominous of even more radical and extensive reforms. A veritable coalition against Turgot was formed, in which Parliamentarians linked hands with the devout, courtiers and country squires with financiers and speculators of every sort; the queen herself joined it for personal reasons—the minister had refused her his help for one of her favourites. A long campaign of libels and popular songs succeeded; Parliament remonstrated against the Edicts of January and a "bed of justice" was needed to quell its resistance (March 12). The king seemed to be holding his own; but, at bottom, he was shattered. The queen returned to the charge and, on the 12th of May, Turgot received a command to resign his appointment.

The coalition against the minister

His fall

He had never deceived himself as to the solidity of the royal support, or the disinterestedness of the privileged. He wrote a letter, admirably dignified, to Louis XVI which ended in these prophetic words: "*I hope that time will not justify me.*" Death surprised him in 1781, eight years before the day of retribution which he had foreseen. When his disgrace was announced his enemies were loud in their rejoicings, even some bishops did not refrain from giving thanks to Heaven for this disgrace of a just man, as for a signal benefaction. Absolute monarchy had lost for the last time its chance of continuance.

C. Necker at the Finances

At the end of a few months he was succeeded in the finances by Necker, a Genevese banker, who received in June, 1777, the title of Director-General of the Finances. He was versed in little outside money matters and although well regarded by the Philosophers, had no comprehensive ideas on reform. He subsisted on expedients, particularly loans, whose success was assured by his personal credit. He made, however, a few attempts at reform in his service; he tried, for instance, to introduce more order into the accounts. Above all he took up Turgot's projects for dealing with the Farmers-General; and adopted also with some modifications the ideas of his predecessor on the creation of *Provincial Assemblies* with which he went so far as to make an experiment in Berry (1778). He gave detailed and wary consideration to everything that he undertook, looking invariably for the mean between extremes. Yet he was not long in disquieting those who, for all his caution, could divine behind it intentions much resembling those of Turgot; namely, the devout, financiers, Parliamentarians, court profiteers. He achieved his own ruin by the publication in 1781 of a *Compte-rendu* (balance-sheet), in which he rendered intelligible to the country for the first time the organisation and state of the finances.

The *Compte-rendu* (1781)

His figures, chiefly intended to give confidence to those who had money to lend and to show the value of his own administration, were purposely inaccurate, showing a substantial surplus in place of a still greater deficit, but he made the public aware that the pensions and gratuities drawn by the hangers-on of the court amounted to twenty-eight million livres a year and he accompanied this revelation with a commentary which exasperated those who were implicated. The balance-sheet had an extraordinary success in France and abroad, but it brought the cabal against the minister to a head; Maurepas himself took part in it. Necker, realising that he was deserted by the king, handed in his resignation (May 19, 1781). His

Fall of Necker

departure produced a sensation even more general and lively than that which had greeted the fall of Turgot.

Calonne

After some men of little account, *Calonne* became Controller-General, in 1783, through the influence of the queen. He was a man of wit, amiability and intelligence, who wanted to please everybody, most of all the queen, though she liked him but little. He filled his coffers by loan after loan and emptied them to pay for the festivities and fantasies of Marie-Antoinette. When he came to the end of his devices and saw Parliament making a set against him, he confessed the deficit to the king to whom he proposed a plan for fiscal reform inspired by the ideas of Turgot and Necker, and thus really in accordance with good sense and necessity.

The Assembly of Notables (1787)

An *Assembly of Notables*, chosen by the king, was convoked to examine the proposals of the minister (February, 1787). These, although of the privileged orders, against all expectation showed independence, took in very ill part the explanations of Calonne—anxious to throw the blame on abuses which he had himself aggravated—and began to talk of a States-General. Calonne tried to intimidate them. He was quite unsuccessful, and in the end was chosen as the victim by Louis XVI (April 8).

Loménie de Brienne. The growing opposition of the privileged orders

One of his fiercest adversaries, *Loménie de Brienne*, Archbishop of Toulouse, succeeded him and took up his plans—being, in fact, quite incapable of devising others in their place. The Notables opposed him as they had Calonne, and he, having become Prime Minister, dismissed them (May 25); but Parliament at once took up the game, "remonstrated" against the deficit and refused to register an edict establishing a territorial tax, protesting "*that the nation alone had the right of granting subsidies.*" This was the starting-point of a conflict which grew more and more bitter till the middle of 1788. Beds of justice and sentences of exile, strokes of force by the government, followed not infrequently by retreats and capitulations, quite failed to dispose of a resistance which ended by bringing in the Provincial Parliaments, and by provoking throughout the realm increasing agitation and some rioting. The monarchic edifice was breaking down on all sides.

Convocation of the States-General (1788)

However, the idea of a convocation of the States-General, started by the Notables, taken up by Parliament and further by the Assembly of the Clergy (June 15, 1788) was making headway. An assembly of the three orders, meeting on their own initiative at Vizille, in Dauphiné, drew up an appeal to the other provinces of France, urging them to refuse the taxes as long as the States-General had not been convoked (July 21, 1788). Brienne, at the end of his resources, face to face with bankruptcy, reconciled himself to the adoption of the one remaining plan by which he could still obtain money, dangerous though it was: that demanded by the voice of the people. On the 8th of August, 1788, a decree of Council appeared which fixed the 1st of May in the following year for the meeting of the States-General. Seventeen days later, the minister fell and Louis XVI resigned himself to the recall of Necker, the one man who was thought capable of finding some means by which bankruptcy could be avoided. The Revolution had begun.

Conclusion

Reform of the monarchy of Louis XIV, degenerate and altogether out of harmony with new opinion and new needs, could be effective only if it were primarily *social;* that is to say, if it abolished class *privileges.* As long as this fundamental transformation was not accomplished, there could be no prospect of anything but palliatives and ephemeral ameliorations. The privileged orders had always prevented clear-sighted ministers, throughout the eighteenth century, from really stating the essential problem, and in face of this the most generous and most disinterested endeavours had been fruitless. They could never understand that they stood to lose less, by consenting to sacrifices limited by themselves, than by letting themselves be driven by necessity to a total and indiscriminate sacrifice. In their blindness, they had desperately opposed the king's authority, thinking him a convert to their adversaries' ideas; they had demanded a States-General, not from any liberalism, but in the hope that the old-time assembly would make good their own old position, by freeing the State from monetary cares, and perhaps by weakening the royal despotism, which they now felt so irksome. Without this fundamental miscalculation, they would never have let loose the irresistible forces which were to sweep them away, and whose power was so far suspected by none. But for the action they took, and compelled the monarch to take, the Revolution might not have been possible so soon; in any case it may fairly be questioned how it could have been so.

It must not be supposed that France, in spite of her disordered government and ill-managed finances, was at that time *in a worse condition* than other European States, built more or less on her model—with the exception of England. She was, on the contrary, far more active and alive than most others. Her misery was not greater than theirs and she was beyond all question better fitted than they to endure it. Her intellectual and artistic culture, most brilliant and fertile, had created in her a refined sensibility, with wants of which she had so far been unaware and that nearly all peoples were beginning to learn from her, thanks to the universal radiation of her influence in the domains of the mind and of art. And for this reason she was first in the field with the Revolution.

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CHAPTER XXV

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF FRANCE FROM 1715 TO 1789

General character of this policy

After the reverses suffered by Louis XIV, and after the treaties of Utrecht which had determined their consequences, France was no longer in a position to direct European politics, but she still remained one of the great world powers and she continued to play in the eighteenth century a prominent part in the affairs of the West. Yet she gained but little good from her activities.

Causes of its unsuccess

The causes of this unsuccess were as follows:

(1) She was obliged, owing to her geographical position and her political traditions, to split her energies between continental questions and maritime and colonial questions, while she had no longer sufficient strength to act effectively in both directions at once.

(2) Her diplomatists too frequently lacked insight; brought up to admire Richelieu and Mazarin, whose main object had been, in logical adaptation to circumstances, to overthrow the power of the house of Austria, their one idea was to follow a policy of hostility to the emperor. There was now, however, no reason for such a policy; Louis XIV on his death-bed had acutely felt the necessity of abandoning it, seeing clearly that at the end of the war of the Spanish Succession France's real adversary was England.

(3) The selfishness of certain individual interests intervened on several occasions to confuse the views adopted by the most able politicians as to the general interests of the kingdom, and more or less openly to stand in their way. Thus the Duke of Orléans, anxious to assure himself of the crown, if Louis XV should die before him, played purely for his own hand.

Different factions and coteries of the court had likewise their own diplomatic programmes to promote and their own foreign intrigues abroad. Thus from one end of the reign of Louis XV to the other, side by side with the official diplomacy, clandestine organisations were more or less actively at work, which not infrequently did a great deal of harm. They were known as the *Secrets*. The regent had thus his own *Secret* and the Duke of Bourbon his; the king himself had his, concerned mainly with the affairs of Poland, in which his instructions to his private agents occasionally contradicted those to his official envoys. All this double-dealing could hardly fail to be dangerous.

(4) Finally, only too often the men in charge of French interests, ministers, diplomatists or generals, appointed through court intrigues, proved greatly inferior to their task.

In other respects, European politics, at that time, when princes conducted them as they pleased, in secret and regardless of the people's opinions, were highly complicated and confused. They were subject to sudden changes of front explicable only by changes of feeling or simple alterations of outlook on the part of individuals concerned. As a whole, they are largely unintelligible, considered merely *in terms* of France; they can be understood only if examined from the point of view of England or of Prussia.

I

The period of hostility to Austria

A. *Settlement of the Spanish succession* (1715-1725)

The treaties of Utrecht had ended the war of the Spanish succession, but had not finally settled the question which had caused it. Neither Charles VI of Austria nor Philip V of Spain were satisfied with their share of the heritage of Charles II. Both therefore endeavoured, each in a different interest, to get the question reopened and to obtain a revision of the treaties. England and the regent, on the contrary, maintained that things should remain as the conventions of 1713 and 1714 had left them; the first because she saw in this, and correctly so, a fulcrum for her power; the second because he thus secured a guarantee against any ambitious stroke on the part of Philip V in the event of Louis XV's death and a certitude that the crown of France would not go to the King of Spain, but would necessarily return to himself.

Treaty of Vienna (1725)

However, six years of negotiations, changing alliances and confused hostilities followed; in their course France was seen in alliance with her enemies of yesterday, England and Holland, making war on the grandson of Louis XIV in Spain; finally the treaty of Vienna (1725) confirmed afresh the principle and the fact of the partition of the Spanish monarchy.

B. *The Polish succession* (1733-1738)

It will be remembered that the Duke of Bourbon, more in his own interest than in that of France, had in 1726 married Louis XV to the daughter of Stanislas Leszczynski, the deposed King of Poland. The latter, on the death of his more fortunate rival, Augustus II of Saxony in 1733, succeeded in recovering the throne. Unfortunately, Austria and Russia thought it to their interest to set up another Saxon, Augustus III, in opposition to him and undertook the task of his expulsion.

Chauvelin and Fleury

At the court of Versailles, about Chauvelin, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, there was a highly reactionary party obsessed with the old doctrine founded on hostility to Austria, which also made it a point of honour to support the father-in-law of the king in his pretensions. It was powerful enough to involve France, in concert with Spain and the Duke of Savoy, in a war with Austria, in spite of Fleury, the most clear-sighted French minister of the time. The old minister said: "*When the young folk have finished their dance, the king will have to pay the fiddler.*" He accordingly stopped the dance as soon as he had a chance of so doing.

Treaty of Vienna (1738)

In the settlement which ensued in 1738,—once more at Vienna,—he secured for Stanislas, who had been expelled from Poland, the retention of the title of king and the grant of Lorraine, ceded by Duke Francis, husband to Maria Theresa of Austria, who, for his part, received compensation in Italy. The duchy was to revert to France on the death of Stanislas. The whole transaction was highly advantageous in that it completed the northeastern frontier of the realm and definitely settled a question that had often been raised. *It is the most substantial advantage which France will gain from her policy of the eighteenth century.*

The policy of Fleury

Fleury had desired that peace might be kept in order that France might recuperate, in view of the conflict with England which he saw to be inevitable. He therefore devoted his time to playing consistently the part of mediator in Europe, to avoid the development of the innumerable conflicts which were ripe for explosion between 1726 and 1740. He was, however, unable to prevent a rupture between England and Spain; the protectionist policy of Patino, the Spanish minister, gave much trouble, claiming altogether to prohibit the highly profitable exploitation of the Spanish colonies, which the English had little by little come to monopolise since 1715. Tempers grew warm on both sides; collisions more or less serious grew more and more numerous, and war broke out in 1740. The cardinal would have preferred a longer delay; however, he ranged himself on the side of Spain. But the death of the emperor, Charles VI, which occurred a few days later, brought a European question to the fore by which the Anglo-Spanish difference was completely eclipsed.

C. *The Austrian succession* (1740-1748)

This death whetted some greedy appetites; the late king had left only a daughter, Maria Theresa, the wife of Francis of Lorraine, whom none thought capable of defending herself. Her father, aware that he was leaving her in peril, beset by greedy and unscrupulous neighbours, had attempted to protect her by obtaining a guarantee of her rights as heiress from all the princes of Europe. He had induced them to sign, in return for sundry concessions and after long negotiations, a solemn declaration to this effect. This is known as the *Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VI.*[1] But the prospect of gain proved stronger than respect for the given word. Frederick II was the first to fall; he had succeeded his father, Frederick William I, on the throne of Prussia, and he claimed Silesia as his property.

The *Pragmatic Sanction*

Alliance with Prussia

At this news, the anti-Austrian party at the French court, the party of the classic policy, thought that here was a good chance of obtaining a final advantage over the old enemy. Supported by Madame de Châteauroux, who at that time dominated Louis XV, upheld by a coterie fired with an unconsidered enthusiasm for the King of Prussia and moreover never quiet, it dragged in Louis XV, overwhelmed Fleury, who did his utmost to keep France out of the business, and engineered an alliance with Frederick II against Maria Theresa. As England on her side supported Austria there was now war by land, by sea and in the colonies.

The war

By land it was full of glory. The victories of Fontenoy in 1745, Raucoux, in 1746, Lawfeld, in 1747, won by Marshal de Saxe,[2] gave new renown to French arms. *By sea* the war was indecisive. *In the colonies* French and English successes were nearly equal. In the Indies the French might have obtained a decisive advantage had it not been for the jealousies between her two generals, *Dupleix* and *La Bourdonnais*, which set them at variance and negatived their efforts.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748)

Peace, signed at *Aix-la-Chapelle* in 1748, brought no real profit except to Frederick II who kept Silesia and to the Bourbons of Spain who acquired Naples. The French and the English reciprocally returned their conquests and France thus found that she had expended much blood and gold for nothing. Public opinion was loud in censure of the treaty and gave rise to the saying, which is still commonly current, as applied to pains uselessly taken and ineffective effort: *to work for the King of Prussia.* Fleury who had died in 1743 was no longer present to defend the interests of the realm.

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[1] Following the dispositions made by Leopold I, father of Joseph I (1705-1711) and of Charles VI (1711-1740) the heritage was to revert (*1*) to Joseph, (*2*) to Charles, (*3*) to the daughters of Joseph. The *Pragmatic* modified this agreement though sworn to by Charles.

[2] Maurice de Saxe (1696-1750) was a natural son of Augustus II, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. He entered the service of the King of France during the Regency and finally settled in that country after certain celebrated adventures in northern Europe; he became marshal in 1744.

II

The period of alliance with Austria (1748-1763)

A. *Between the two wars*

The hostilities in the colonies during the peace

(a) In India

There was a general feeling in France that a solution should be found for the problem of marine and colonial rivalry, adjourned and not settled by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. In England there was a similar feeling. As a matter of fact, peace did not interrupt hostilities. In *India*, the two competing companies, the French under Dupleix, the English under Clive, continued in conflict and Dupleix aided by de Bussy had decidedly the best of it. Unfortunately, the high cost of enterprises conducted for results so far in the future disquieted the accountants of the Company, more anxious for the earning of immediate and substantial dividends than for laying up fortunes for their heirs. They therefore caused the over-bold governor to be recalled (1754) whose successor, named Godehen, a complete stranger to Indian affairs, believed that he had assured peace by straightway signing a treaty with the English under which the two companies renounced all sovereignty over the native princes. This was throwing away the results of the policy of Dupleix which had been gained precisely by continual interventions in the affairs of the country and by the establishment of protectorates.

(b) In America

In *America*, where the French colonists in Canada had the greatest possible interest in reaching the great plain of the Mississippi and the English colonists in preventing them, the struggle was very speedily resumed. Its main theatre was the valley of the Ohio which gave the best approach from Canada to *Louisiana.*[3] There the French built a line of forts and the English attempted to stop them by raising a fort in their turn, called *Necessity,* facing Fort Duquesne. This occasioned hard fighting in which Washington took part. In 1757 the English colonists held a Congress at Albany in order to agree upon measures to be taken against the French Canadians, who on their side asked the metropolis for reinforcements, and received four thousand men.

The question of Hanover

Everything pointed to the immediate resumption of open war between France and England. Among the entourage of Louis XV there was a prevalent opinion that a serious blow might be struck at England by occupying Hanover, the personal property of the English reigning family. Frederick II, however, being sounded, did not lend himself to the idea. He did not believe it to be in his interest to fight the English and thought his forces none too large to make head against the continental complications which he saw coming. For this reason, so far from supporting France in her enterprise, he signed a treaty of neutrality with England (January, 1756). This decision was the starting-point of a veritable transposition of alliances.

B. *The transposition in the alliances* (1756)

Austria, now for some years, had been making advances to Louis XV; Madame de Pompadour, all the more ardently *Austrian,* as Madame de Châteauroux had been *Prussian,* was disposed to favour them, the more so since Frederick II had offended her by some obnoxious jocularities. At the same time, the King of Prussia had alienated the Czarina, Elizabeth, and Maria Theresa strongly desired to recover Silesia. Finally, France, Austria and Russia combined against England and Prussia and by the time that these new combinations were settled, the war known as the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) began.

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[3] This was the name which Cavelier de la Salle had given to the south part of the Mississippi plain, starting from the mouth of the Ohio after his voyage of exploration (1681-1683). New Orleans came from the time of Law (1717).

C. *The Seven Years' War (1756-1763)*

1. *In Europe*

2. *Loss of the colonies*

(a) India

This, like the preceding war, had three faces for France. *On the Continent*, conducted most frequently by incapable generals, it was generally unfortunate, the battle of Rosbach (November 5, 1757) lost by Soubise to Frederick II came near to being a complete rout. *By sea*, the English were not long in obtaining the advantage; they even became so bold as to hazard a landing on the Breton coast with the object of destroying Saint-Malo, whose privateers did them much damage. They failed, and a small action brought about by the Breton militia at Saint-Cast compelled them to re-embark (1757). They made attempts more or less fortunate at other points: the Isle of Aix—whose occupation would command Rochefort—Cherbourg, and somewhat later, Belle-Isle (1761). Choiseul, who desired to do the like to them in 1759, completely failed and succeeded only in putting his own fleet out of the fight. *In the colonies*, there was disaster. In India, Clive no longer opposed by Dupleix gained the advantage over Lally Tolendal, an Irishman in the service of the French Company, a lump of gallantry and good intentions, but as ill-informed as could well be as to the manners and politics of the country and the circumspection which they necessitated. He allowed himself to be shut up in Pondicherry, where he was obliged to capitulate after five months' valiant resistance (1761). The same merchants who had failed to understand Dupleix, fell upon the unfortunate man, made him responsible for their ruin, and had him condemned to death. Clive, reviving the methods of Dupleix, laid hands on Bengal and prepared for the English conquest of the whole peninsula.

(b) Canada

The destruction of the royal fleet prevented the effective relief of Canada, about which, indeed, neither the king nor public opinion were greatly concerned. The English minister, Pitt, on the contrary, made the needed effort and secured the upper hand for the American colonists. Montcalm, with troops greatly inferior in numbers, made a fine resistance. He fell on the 13th of September, 1759, in a battle before Quebec. The town capitulated a few days later and Montreal fell in its turn. By the following year all Canada had been lost.

The peace (1763)

The treaties which ended the war carried with them the consequences of these many defeats and abandonments. The *treaty of Paris* (February 10, 1763) confirmed the ruin of the French colonial empire in favour of England. The latter also took care to secure supremacy at sea. The *treaty of Hubertsburg* which re-established peace on the Continent was altogether to the advantage of Frederick II; Louis XV does not appear to have understood the magnitude of the defeat which he had suffered and it is not without surprise that we find Voltaire speaking of the loss of Canada as that "*of a few acres of snow.*" Politicians knew better. The Cardinal of Bernis, who had preceded Choiseul at the Foreign Office, wrote that the part of France throughout the war "*had been extravagant and disgraceful.*" It had been disastrous as well. Choiseul, who in signing the peace had yielded to necessity, proceeded forthwith to prepare for retaliation, to reorganise the army, to repair the fleet, to weave a stout web of alliances, to unite the Bourbons of France, Spain and Italy, by the confirmation of the *Family Compact*, concluded in 1761, which had already committed Spain to the war with England in 1762. But the efforts of Choiseul did no more for the moment than prepare his fall. Louis XV had no wish for fresh wars, and the fear that his minister would provoke one, as soon as he felt ready, greatly contributed to the disgrace which he inflicted on him in 1770.

Choiseul's plans for retaliation

D. *The affairs of Poland*

He was not long, it was said, in regretting him when he saw the turn of affairs in Poland, the only matter perhaps in which he took a personal and permanent interest. The anarchy of that unhappy country fostered by, and indeed almost inherent in, its political constitution had for a long time encouraged the cynical cupidity of its neighbours, Russia, Prussia and Austria. Some intolerant measures passed by the Polish diet against non-Catholics, *dissenters*, some of whom were attached to Greek Orthodoxy, others to Protestantism, had given the Czarina, Catherine II, and Frederick II the pretext for intervention which they sought. The Polish patriots, who attempted to resist the Russian troops, received encouragement and some subsidies from Choiseul; they put their last hope in France. But when in 1772 the three harpies finally agreed to award themselves each a good slice of Polish territory, Choiseul was no longer in power, and Louis XV let matters take their course. He felt content with observing that things would have gone otherwise if Monsieur de Choiseul had been there.

The first partition (1772)

This impotence of France to prevent such an act of brigandage against a country so long counted among her allies was a fresh and keenly felt humiliation. The dismemberment of Poland was to be completed in two acts (1793 and 1795) while France was paralysed by the French Revolution.

III

Policy of Vergennes

His spirit and his aim

When the Duke of Aiguillon had been dismissed, the influence of Maurepas placed foreign affairs in the hands of the Count of Vergennes (July 21, 1774). He was a diplomat by profession and had a first-rate knowledge of Europe. He saw very clearly, as Choiseul had seen, that the objective of French policy must be the overthrow of England and that it could be reached only through trustworthy continental alliances.

A. *The intervention in America*

At the moment when he became minister relations were strained between England and her American colonies. He followed the course of events with the closest attention. When the Americans had determined to resort to arms and assert their independence, he began by facilitating the despatch of arms and munitions to the "insurgents," as they were then called, and he allowed a number of volunteers to go to their assistance, among them the Marquis of La Fayette. Louis XVI was hesitating on the brink of direct intervention, which Turgot discouraged owing to peace being needful for the repair of the finances. Vergennes, on the contrary, insisted that the opportunity should be seized. The capitulation of an English army near Saratoga (October 17, 1777) gave the king confidence in the strength of the American insurrectionary movement and enabled the minister to carry out his plan. He sent de Rayneval to arrange with the insurgents a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance, which was signed with Franklin on the 6th of February, 1778.

The treaty of 1778

The war

A landing party commanded by Rochambeau and a fleet under Admiral de Grasse proceeded to collaborate with Washington. French squadrons reappeared on the seas and acquitted themselves excellently. One, commanded by Suffren, won considerable successes on the coast of India. Vergennes, adhering to his system of alliances, negotiated and induced Spain to come into line side by side with France, and he took a great part in the formation of the league of Armed Neutrality (1780) which combined Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Spain and France against the maritime domination of England, as being unbearable to neutrals. This league was an effective counter-stroke to the English action in America. It is true that peace concluded at Versailles on the 3d of September, 1783, which established the independence of the United States, did not bring France any very notable gains—the restitution of two of the Antilles (Saint Lucia and Tobago), of Senegal, of five towns in India (Pondicherry, Karikal, Mahé, Yanaon, Chandernagor), and of Louisiana, which Spain had received in 1763, and which she returned. But though the material profit might be slight the moral profit was quite another matter. France had regained the prestige which she had lost by sixty years of uncertain, unskilful or unfortunate policy.

Treaty of Versailles (1783)

What it brought to France

B. *Vergennes and Austria*

The marriage of the Dauphin Louis, who was to be Louis XVI, with Marie-Antoinette, daughter of Maria Theresa, had strengthened the Austrian alliance. Vergennes did nothing to weaken it, but he was able to keep within bounds the ambition of Joseph II, who, having cast eyes on the Bavarian succession, was obliged to renounce it by the treaty of Teschen (May 13, 1779). He was likewise able to settle, by the arbitration of Louis XVI, a serious difference between Joseph and Holland in 1785. The attitude of umpire and peacemaker adopted by the King of France was much more beneficial to the kingdom than the promiscuous enterprises of Louis XV and even than the policy of force of Louis XIV.

Conclusion

Thus, on the eve of the Revolution, in 1787, when Vergennes died, France had a higher standing in European politics than at the death of Louis XIV. The reign of Louis XV, which had done her such ill service at home, had been equally detrimental to her interests abroad. Her policy from 1715 to 1774, apart from Fleury's clear-sighted and consistent common sense and the work of Choiseul, gives only too often a painful impression of incertitude and instability and indeed of exertions that come to nothing. It had cost the country dear in men, in territory and in money. Yet two important gains had meanwhile been made, that of *Lorraine*, on the death of Stanislas Leszczynski in 1766 and that of *Corsica* by a treaty signed at Versailles in 1768 with the Genoese who did not know what to do with it.

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CHAPTER XXVI

FRANCE TOWARDS 1789. THE "ANCIEN RÉGIME"

AT the end of the eighteenth century in France, the ideas, aspirations, material interests of men are at variance with the political and social and moral régime imposed on them. They are no longer able to endure the *Ancien Régime*, as it was to be called after the Revolution, and the *arbitrary power, privilege and selfishness* of the governing class which are its characteristic features.

I

The government

A. *The right divine*

Theory and practice

The government rests entirely *on the absolute authority of the king*, the representative of God on earth. Being justified by the *right divine*, it is uncontrolled and responsible to none. It is imposed from above like a *dogma*. It is supported on the Catholic faith and on the Church, throne and altar reciprocally sustaining one another. This, at least, was the theory. Such a régime could be endurable in practice only on the condition that the occupant of the throne should be always a man of genius, liberal, disinterested, the father of his people and free to act as he saw fit. It is only too clear that all the good qualities of Louis XIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI added together would be far fewer than those of the ideal sovereign demanded. As the storm-clouds gathered, the king himself appeared to grow dubious as to his own rights, so hesitant and diffident did he prove to be in their assertion. He could no longer command the respect of even his own officials, as the almost chronic revolt of Parliaments under Louis XV and Louis XVI is sufficient to show.

The prince might well understand that he had a duty to fulfil towards his subjects; enlightened by a conscientious minister, he might realise that something or other called for reformation in the State, but here his good will, after a few more or less meritorious efforts, would soon find itself paralysed by the *court*.

B. *The court:* Its influence on the king

Light-minded, careless, frivolous, with no understanding of reality or even of its own interest, the court built about the sovereign a factitious world, which hid the real one from his sight. It imposed on him ministers of its own choice and overthrew them by its own intrigues. It was the real ruler of the government and it made impossible any reform whatever. Nevertheless, during the epoch of Louis XVI, the new ideas mustered some adherents among the young nobles of the court. They were weary of doing nothing but trying to kill time in amusement; and they dreamed of playing an active part in the State. Their Catholic faith, undermined and sometimes shattered from top to bottom, could no longer uphold their faith in monarchy; absolute royalty became for them no more than one among many other forms of government offered to man's choice, no less open to criticism than the rest.

Its cost to the public finances

The accusation most bitterly brought against the court by public opinion, a new and rapidly growing force in these years, was that it was largely responsible for the financial distress. The great seigneurs were ordinarily large landowners, but court life was costly to him who sought to "shine" in it, and thus it came to pass that most courtiers could "maintain their position" only by appealing to the generosity of the king or by running into debt, often by both together. An often quoted scandalous example is the fortune made by the Polignacs, who by the favour of Marie-Antoinette succeeded in obtaining upwards of 700,000 livres in pensions, and they, though they may have done better than others, were not alone in doing well in their degree. About four thousand families who had been "presented" to the monarch frequented the court. Among those of their members who resided at Versailles were divided the multifarious appointments in the household of the king, of the queen, of the "children of France," of the princes of the blood, representing an annual expense of about thirty-three million livres. They still absorbed almost the whole of the twenty-eight millions which the list of pensions amounted to. And to all these personal expenses—I mean directly concerned with persons—should be added those, by themselves enormous, which fell on the treasury for the amusements; that is to say, the daily life of this army of idlers.

C. *The central government*

The central government, organised about the king, was fixed in the form given it by Louis XIV; some details only had been modified since the failure of the *polysynodie*. It has been justly described as "*incoherent in despotism and anarchic in centralisation.*"

The Councils and the Ministers

It was composed of *Councils*, many in number, and ostensibly distinct, but, in reality, to some degree indiscriminate, and of *six Ministers*. The latter did not form a *Cabinet;* they did not deliberate in common; they had no solidarity; some indeed were not admitted to the Council. However great might be their personal influence and power they remained *commis;* that is to say, mere agents of the king, in charge of his business in this or that department. The *departments* themselves were ill defined and unstable; particular services passed from one to another, as ministers personally saw fit, or overlapped into two or three at once to such an extent that all real control of expenditure became impossible, and disputes over jurisdictions frequently paralysed decision.

The *bureaux*

This instability of ministers and their too common incompetence assured the practical supremacy of the *bureaux* in which the vices common to every crystallised bureaucracy ran riot: routine, procrastination, jealousy of one service towards another.

II

The administration

A. *The administrative areas*

Such government issued in an ill regulated and tyrannical administration. The *frontiers* of the kingdom were not even yet everywhere clearly determined; on the outskirts of the Empire, for instance, it was not always known precisely where the king's authority ceased. The *administrative areas—military*, in case of the provinces, *civil* in those of the generalships or intendantships, the *judicial* which define parliamentary areas, the *religious* which are the dioceses—have different boundaries and do not coincide with one another. Established in different epochs, according to particular needs, with no thought for any comprehensive plan or intercorrelation, they had remained unaltered ever since and they transmitted the strangest confusions to the future.

The *provinces* and the *military governments*

The feudal provinces, successively annexed to the royal domain, were divided into *thirty-eight military governments*, varying greatly in extent. For instance, Metz and its district formed a government side by side with that of Lorraine; it was the same with Toul and the Toulois. Le Havre had its governor who was not to be confounded with Normandy's. The governors were always great seigneurs, whose appointment, having come to be purely honorific, did not involve even personal residence. They were content to appear in their capital on a few ceremonial occasions and to draw their salaries punctually.

Provincial individualism

Every province, on its inclusion in the royal domain, had kept some part at least of its customs and privileges; each had, so to speak, its individual charter. Some, such as Alsace and Franche-Comté, had these guaranteed by the very treaties which had subjected them to the domination of the King of France. They generally greatly prized these ancient usages and the distinction which they gave; on the eve of the Revolution, they seemed far more attached to their own particular interests than to those of the kingdom considered as a whole: particularism came before patriotism.

The *generalships* and *intendantships*

The areas known as *generalships* or *intendantships* were thirty-three in number (twenty-six generalships and seven intendantships). They, too, were very unequal in size. Two, those of Toulouse and of Montpellier, were governed by a single intendant. They were under different fiscal administrations: in the twenty which comprised the *districts of election, taxation* was fixed by the government, as it saw fit, by the intermediary of its agents or *élus* and was apportioned by the local authorities. In the others which covered the *districts of States,* the tax, voted by the Provincial States on the requisition of the government, was also apportioned by them. There were at that time six districts of States, whose capitals were Aix, Dijon, Montpellier, Rennes, Toulouse and Metz. The seven *intendantships* represented the districts recently acquired; that is to say, united to the kingdom under Louis XIV (Franche-Comté, Flanders, Roussillon, Alsace) or under Louis XV (Lorraine, Dombes).[1] Under the Ancien Régime it is quite exceptional for any rule to be applied without exceptions and for any administrative apportionment to be without contradictions; thus among the generalships of the districts of election, territories could be found which were in reality districts of States (in the generalship of Auch) and inversely in the generalships of the districts of States where districts of *election* were to be met with (in the generalship of Dijon).

Distinction between *districts of election* and *districts of States*

B. *The reign of privilege*

This distinction between districts of States and districts of election already meant a privilege for the former. This statement applies similarly to the whole administration of the Ancien Régime, with its customary use of different scales in similar cases with alteration of the weights at random. No universal principles, but as many principles as there were persons or conditions, or, more often, habitual and arbitrary decisions varying with the social importance and the relations of the interested party. In a province the real authority was with the *Intendant* who directly represented the king. This functionary is still chosen—as in times past—from among the Masters of Requests of the Privy Council. He is first appointed to a small intendantship and, if he succeeds, passes to one of greater importance. In the contrary case, he can be recalled. Little by little, the intendants have gathered into their hands all the functions in their districts which involve exercise of authority; so that on them everything depends. Actual dynasties of intendants grow up which confer on their members the prestige of long continuance; their families grow rich and gain more and more consideration from their credit and wealth. The habits of independence which they acquire in consequence would have been a great surprise to Colbert. There were some among them who, displaying for the good of their province such initiative as they dared, with the help of the power that had come into their hands, were able by personal action largely to mitigate the defects of the régime. Turgot had done this at Limoges, Trudaine at Riom, Tourny at Bordeaux, d'Étigny at Auch, Meilhan at Aix and many others. The more zealous frequently applied their energies to large public works, roads, canals, the embellishment and sanitation of towns, which were too costly to their provinces to be for the moment very acceptable. Most of them called themselves "philanthropists" and at Versailles they were sometimes accused of "popularising"; that is to say, of pushing the interests of their district in order to make themselves popular. In this, however, they rarely succeeded; because, in the first place, the almost hereditary succession among them, which tended to restrict the king's choice to one set of families, im-

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[1] Generalships and intendantships were designated by the name of their chief town. The seven intendantships were thus those of Besançon, Lille (yielded to France in 1668), Maubeuge or Valenciennes (yielded in 1678), Perpignan, Strasbourg, Nancy, Trévoux.

The *Intendants*

Growth of their authority

Their initiative powers

Their spirit

paired both their zeal and their competence and also because, highly jealous of their power, they opposed all reforms, however useful, which might diminish it—such as the experiment of Provincial Assemblies—and finally because, whether they would or no, they represented what was essentially a tyranny, and were obliged to be strict in order to keep their subjects quiet—however well grounded any discontent might be—and to enforce the regular payment of taxes.

C. *The greed for money*

To raise money and to *make it* was, in fact, the principal and constant preoccupation of the government of the Ancien Régime. This money it exacted by a complicated and confused system of taxes, designed on no comprehensive plan and added to, little by little, by expedients which would gradually become sanctioned by usage.

Direct taxes: the *taille*

Of these, the first to be distinguished is the *taille*, an old direct tax of seigneurial origin transferred to the service of the king. As *real* it was levied mainly on landed property; as *personal* it applied to the movable property of the tax-payer. In spite of the efforts of royalty to diminish the number of exemptions under this impost, it is now paid only by commoners. It is very heavy and is levied with great severity, since in each parish the collectors are held responsible for the returns on their private property. In the second place came the *poll tax*, a personal impost, theoretically borne by all subjects; but the clergy had obtained redemption from the common charges by the *gratuitous donation;* the privileged among the nobility had obtained special receivers and reductions; the magistrates had the apportionment in their own hands in their jurisdictions, and even the districts of States had obtained a contract. Thus the main weight of the tax fell on the people. It was the same with the *twentieth*, a tax on income, due by all subjects, but paid by relatively few of the privileged.

The *poll tax* and the *twentieth*

Indirect taxes

Of the indirect taxes, the chief were the *aids* and the

Aids and gabelle

gabelle. The greater part of the *aids* came from the taxes on drink, but they included dues levied on several bodies of tradesmen, the *extraordinary levies,* imposts upon various commercial transactions, State *monopolies,* such as gunpowder and saltpetre for instance, *custom-house* duties, the *royal labour dues* and so forth. Of all imposts the *gabelle* was the most hated: it dealt with the *sale of salt,* the price of which, fixed by the State and very unequal from one district to another, might vary from sixty livres to two livres the quintal. The *fraude*—that is, smuggling and dealing in contraband salt, not bought from the public stores—was ferociously repressed. Even today this ill repute of the *gabelou,* or agent of the *gabelle,* is traditional and very much alive among French people.

Vices of the fiscal system

Direct taxation alone was *nearly four times heavier* than it was in 1914. And what made these impositions particularly hard to bear was not only their unjust apportionment, throwing the greatest burden on those least able to bear it, but the hateful methods by which they were levied. The indirect taxes in particular, farmed out under contract to the financial companies, gave rise to an outrageous exploitation of the people by men without scruple and with no motive but to enrich themselves. Thus it came to pass that the tax-payers would pay twice or thrice the amount that the king finally received.

The deficit

Yet the royal finances could never overcome the deficit. In 1789, it amounted to fifty-six million livres for a return of four hundred and seventy-five million livres, while the service of the debt absorbed three hundred million livres annually. Bankruptcy appeared imminent; every possible financial expedient had been exhausted.

The burden on the people

Crushed by taxation, by the *tithe* paid to the Church, by the *feudal dues,* still numerous and heavy, paid to the seigneurs, the people, above all those of the countryside, were far from happy. They lived normally in uncertainty and trouble, if not in utter poverty.

D. ***Justice.*** The courts

Justice is in the hands of courts whose prerogatives are inextricably entangled. Above are the thirteen *Parliaments* and the four *Sovereign Councils* which deal with very unequal areas.[2] Below them are the *Présidiaux* (Presidencies) which date from Henry II and the old *Tribunals of Bailiffs and Seneschals.* Under these again are the *Seigneurial and Municipal Courts,* of very unequal competence according to the precedence and privilege with which each has succeeded in clothing itself. Apart from these are the ecclesiastical courts which deal with clerics and are known as *Officialities.*

The right of *evocation* and *letters of cachet*

Additional disorder and chaos are created by the *right of evocation* of the king and the use of *letters of cachet.* The king, still theoretically the fountainhead of justice and the supreme judge, can stop any proceedings which have been started, withdraw the accused from his natural judges, and remit the case for trial before his *Privy Council. Letters of cachet,* which had been in current use since the sixteenth century, were practically mandates for arrest and sequestration arbitrarily issued by the king, or under cover of his signature by a minister, against any person whom the king, or one or another personage with influence, had an interest in putting out of the way. This practice, against which the States-General of Orléans had protested as early as in 1560, had since merely gone from bad to worse and given rise to detestable abuses.

Legislative chaos

The chaos among the courts and the uncertainty of their jurisdictions produced quarrels between them on questions of prerogative, which clogged the wheels of justice; while the uncertainty of the law frequently involved extricable difficulties. Colbert had thought of drawing up for the whole kingdom a "*Body of ordinances as complete as that of Justinian for the Roman law*"; that is to say, a code. The work which he organised for the attainment of this most desirable object did not achieve more than to cut out here and there an isolated clearing in the immense judicial jungle. Still further, side by side with the huge mass of royal ordinances, among which it was hard to find a way, and the innumerable decisions of Council, forming disparate elements in general jurisprudence, there were the local customs and privileges, all tenaciously prized and necessarily taken into account by all judges.

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[2] The Parliaments are those of Paris, Toulouse, Grenoble, Bordeaux, Dijon, Rouen, Aix, Rennes, Metz, Pau, Douai, Besançon, Nancy; the Superior Councils are those of Alsace, Roussillon, Artois and Corsica.

Common law and *statute law*

Over all, there was a distinction between *the districts with common law* and *the districts with statute law;* that is to say, with *Roman law,* which was retained in a large part of the provinces of the South and Centre. But this distinction was in detail extremely complex; Voltaire was able justly to write in pleasantry that in France "*one changed the law one was under as often as one changed one's post-horses.*" It was estimated that there were something like four hundred different petty codes in the kingdom.

Defects of the system

Justice expensive and tardy

Justice was costly as well as chaotic [3] and the good will of the judges too often depended on the sums handed to them by suitors under the name of *épices.* This deplorable abuse had become so firmly established as to constitute an obligation. Moreover, antecedently or subsequently to the exactions of the magistrates, the unlucky suitors must submit to those of their agents or assistants—secretaries, clerks, procurers, ushers—on whom primarily depended the preparation and presentation of the case. Proceedings dragged on interminably, particularly when the parties to the case were without personal importance or influential friends, whereby the magistrates might be made to bestir themselves. It need hardly be said that there was small assurance of impartiality for the rank and file, and that denials of justice and iniquitous sentences were far from exceptional.

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[3] The magistrates in charge of a case fixed as they pleased the number of *vacations* (hearings) or sittings in their office which was employed in its consideration. Each hearing was paid for separately. The total was sometimes appalling.

Barbarity of the criminal procedures

Above all, the procedure in criminal cases was barbaric and lagged much behind the general amelioration in morals and public feeling. It employed the *question*, that is to say torture, as one of its main instruments for obtaining evidence, quite in the Middle Age manner. It still treated the accused like convicts towards whom all kinds of duress might be permissible. What are now known as the *rights of the defence* may be said to have had no existence. The punishments inflicted upon criminals or presumed criminals were revolting to humanity. The prisons themselves and their cells were so insanitary as to be often fatal to life, as is admitted in a report of President Lamoignon, in 1779.

E. *The army.*

The army was *royal*, not *national*. It comprised, side by side with French regiments, others of mercenaries recruited abroad, for instance in Germany and Switzerland. In the kingdom, it was recruited by *crimping* and by *drawing lots* for the militia. Crimping was entrusted to non-commissioned officers, who by every device in their power would cajole the young and innocent met loitering in streets or public places into the signature of an engagement to presumably voluntary service. When once the regiment had got them, it did its best by every possible pretext to keep them; and seldom let them go till they were no longer fit for service.

Recruiting

The militia

The *militia*, first raised under Louis XIV and regularised under Louis XV, formed more than half of the normal effectives. It was based on the military service owed to the king by all his *men;* that is to say, at the time in question, by all *subjects*. But here also, inequality, privilege and arbitrary power were scandalously paramount. The nobles, clergy, greater bourgeois, merchants, officials of the bureaux and in a general way all individuals in the pay of the privileged, all to whom the intendant or his *subdelegates*[4] deigned to show favour were exempt from the drawing of lots. On the whole, the obligation to serve in the militia fell entirely upon the poor and unprotected. Every drawing of lots meant grave trouble in the countryside. The peasants, greatly dreading the *militia*, endeavoured to evade service in every possible way, particularly, when the lot had chosen them, by hiding in the woods, but those, who for this time had escaped the danger, would hunt them out and deliver them to the gendarmes lest there should be a new drawing which might involve themselves. Whatever happened, every parish had to furnish its contingent. Naturally, in an army thus recruited, desertions were numerous. They were estimated at about four thousand a year.

Condition of the soldier

The Count of Saint-Germain, Minister of War from 1775 to 1777, wrote "*a soldier is a dog kept chained up till he fights*," well illustrating the harshness of the discipline and the contempt of the public for the trade of the soldier. The need of keeping in hand men, most of whom had been enlisted against their will and whose main object was to evade the obligations imposed on them, explains the one; the other is often accounted for by the low morale and the miserable lot of the unhappy soldiers, drawn mainly from the lower strata of the population, even indeed from its dregs, poor rogues lazy and shiftless. In this army, the rank of officer was reserved for the nobles, to whom it was generally sold. An ordinance of the 22d of March, 1781, less liberal by far than those of Louvois which left a door open to merit risen from the ranks, laid down that every officer must show *four quarterings* of nobility; his family, in other words, must have been noble for four generations at least. The military schools were closed to the commoner, and in them, favouritism reigned supreme. It was a common re-

The officers

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[4] These were assistants whom the intendant chose to help him in his work and sometimes to take his place entirely. Their authority was confirmed and increased in the eighteenth century.

proach against officers that their technical knowledge was inadequate. *The defence of the country was in fact but imperfectly assured by such an army as this.*

Character of the government

The government, considered either in its principles or in their administrative application, takes the form of an *exploitation of the people*, ill-organised, frequently hesitating in action, but tyrannical in the extreme. It shares its gains with the privileged, those whom their official or more often their social position sets apart from the common run of men.

III

Society

The three *Orders*

Society was based on the classification of Frenchmen of every rank in *three social categories* or *Orders:* the Clergy, the Nobility and the Third Estate. Every order had theoretically its own particular social function, duties and rights; thus, in practice, each held a position of its own. Within the bounds of each of the three orders there was ample room for various distinctions and degrees, as will presently be seen. It was estimated that in a total population of 26,000,000 there were some 130,000 clerics and 140,000 nobles.

A. *The Clergy*

The Clergy is to protect the commonalty with its prayers, and this function, to which were added the care of the poor and education, absolved them from the duties and obligations of other subjects. They formed, practically, a State within the State with a *chief* resident outside France—the pope—with *periodical assemblies*, with *administrative areas* of their own (135 dioceses and about 35,000 parishes) with a *fortune* inalienable and continually increasing, with *revenues*,[5] with *im-*

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[5] It is naturally impossible to make accurate calculations today. It appears, however, that we shall not be far from the truth if we estimate the value of ecclesiastical property at about four milliard golden francs, their annual revenue at 80 to 100 millions and the tithes at 120 millions. If we take also into account the grants and surplice fees, an enormous total is to be inferred. The clergy were prompt to plead poverty by emphasising the charges which they were already bearing, but too much belief must not be given to their

munities of every kind, and with a *justice* of its own. It claimed, in truth, that it contributed to the public funds by paying the *Gratuitous Donation* which came on the average to 5,400,000 livres in the period 1772-1788, by granting pensions to new converts and to aged priests, above all by ensuring the celebration of public worship, relief to the poor and education.

Public worship

Public worship, particularly in the country, was ill-conducted. The *fabriques* (church-wardens) devoted to it did not receive from the benefice-holders the funds formally assigned for their maintenance which should have reached them. Indeed the intendants were often obliged to undertake the repair of churches in order to prevent them from falling into absolute ruin.

Public relief

Many bishops showed themselves very generous and charitable, several of their number—at least thirty in the course of the century—devoted large sums to the building and upkeep of the hospitals; yet, so wide was the difference between what was done and what needed to be done, that the clergy might only too plausibly be accused of failing to apply to charitable works the whole of the revenues derived from foundations placed in their hands for that purpose.

Public education

It was the same with education. In spite of all the highly meritorious efforts on a large scale made by the bishops, during the eighteenth century, to assist municipalities and individuals to establish and maintain the *Little Schools*—that is to say, the Primary Schools—too many parishes still had no school whatever; in too many places their continuity was ill assured. Their masters, ill chosen and often very ill paid, too often neglected an unprofitable task, and the number of illiterates was still far too large, even close to the gates of Paris; in some districts of the kingdom it amounted indeed to half, two-thirds or even three-quarters of the population. Resources

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allegations. Their intention was to diminish to the utmost the sum which their assemblies accorded to the king by the name of the *Gratuitous Donation.*

greatly exceeding those of the clergy would have been needed for the effective remedy of this discreditable state of affairs; but at that time an accurate estimate of resources was difficult and men who were eager for the spread of the "light" were free in their denunciations of clerical indifference.

Current feeling towards the clergy

For the rest, this reproach was but one among many. The idleness, ignorance, remissness and uselessness of the *regulars* were so generally admitted that recruiting for *orders* came to be difficult. The monastic houses grew emptier and emptier and in 1789 a royal commission was at work, which had been established in 1766, to reform the convents and advise on the critical period through which they were passing. The *seculars* were reproached with intolerance, with too frequent immorality, with the heaping up of possessions, with neglect of their pastoral duties, with lust for temporal authority, with the burdens which they laid on the people. These grievances, though often unjustly exaggerated and too generalised, were not unfounded, at any rate in regard to the higher clergy.

The nobility in the Church

The Church had become a fief of the nobility. The Episcopal Sees and Abbacies, all the remunerative benefices, were reserved for the greater nobles, who bestowed them on their younger sons. In some families thus favoured by their position, some appointments became permanent and veritable dynasties of ecclesiastical dignitaries came into being. *In 1789 not a single bishop was a commoner.*

Unbelief and intolerance

These great seigneurs, often educated and enlightened men, were not all convinced believers; there were many and those not of the lowest rank, who did not, in private, conceal their complete unbelief. Yet they thought it their duty to make war on dissenters, and to claim, for the Catholic Church, a monopoly in the directing of souls. For this reason, their Assemblies never failed to protest against the effectual tolerance which the government had in the end conceded to the Protestants, and to demand the complete suppression of heresy in the

State. Similarly, they took care that the bull *Unigenitus* should not be overlooked, though the weakening and almost the disappearance of Jansenism had made it of little use. Finally, they persistently combated *philosophism;* demanding pains and penalties against all authors of "*writings tending to attack religion.*" The higher clergy, too, engaged and paid polemical writers out of their own pockets to combat the advance of new ideas. In the end these efforts availed them little; the public authorities grew weary of religious persecution, and an edict of November, 1787, by granting back to the Protestants their civil rights, finally reinstated them in the realm. The Philosophers had made themselves masters of the minds of all cultivated men; a spirit of religious indifference and a feeling in favour of tolerance made rapid progress among the educated classes while even the clergy did not escape the contagion. Many indeed adopted, as private individuals, the ideas of the day. Yet their official attitude in their Assemblies still excited animadversion from the liberals, to whom it justly seemed an anachronism.

The morals of the clergy

The higher clergy were far from being exemplars of all the virtues. Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne, Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, Cardinal de Rohan, Montmorency-Laval, Bishop of Metz, and others lived the lives of luxurious laymen, in which hunting, balls, plays and magnificent festivities played a much greater part than sacred offices. Their manners were those of the seigneurs of their time. The whole of the court clergy had no better reputation. There were, indeed, many bishops who were beyond reproach, and if in the lower rank of the clergy and among the monks transgressions were not rare, they were far from being the general rule; but public opinion was more repelled by crying scandals than reassured by silent virtues.

The wealth of the Church

It has been already said that the possessions of the clergy were extensive and rich; but their revenues were very unequally

1. The higher clergy

divided. While the Bishop of Strasbourg confessed to an annual income of 400,000 livres, and his brother of Paris to one of 200,000, figures that may actually be doubled here and there, only four or five other prelates at most reached or somewhat exceeded 100,000 livres (Narbonne, Metz, Albi, Auch, Rouen); the majority had between 70,000 and 40,000 livres, some were as low as 10,000 or less. It is true that many obtained the *Commende*—that is to say, the guardianship—of all or part of the abbeys in their dioceses and thence drew considerable "supplements" (130,000 livres at Rouen, 120,000 at Narbonne, 106,000 at Toulouse and so forth).

2. The lower clergy

At the other end of the ecclesiastical ladder, while there might be in the "good countries" some parish priests who were well paid and comfortably off, a large number of the 60,000 members of the lower clergy were reduced to the *portion congrue* (subsistence allowance), their share of the tithes fixed by a royal ordinance of 1786 at 700 livres for *curés* and 350 for *vicaires;* as their surplice fees were ordinarily small, they consequently lived in extreme penury. By so much the more did the opulence of the great prelates appear repellent and unbearable.

Detachment of some bishops from pastoral duties

Many of these resided as little as possible in their episcopal towns, where some spent at most a month in the year, leaving the administration of the diocese to their grand vicar. They never preached in them; they did not even find time to conduct the pastoral visitations prescribed by the canon law, or to hold confirmation, with the result that when they came to administer this sacrament they would find men of all ages, some quite old, who had never had an opportunity of receiving it, kneeling before them side by side with children. Some did not ordain their own priests, but handed them over to some more responsible and conscientious neighbour.

The desire for temporal power

On the other hand, these great ecclesiastical seigneurs took keen interest in temporal things. Some had secular dignities already attached to their episcopal sees. Thus, of the *six ecclesiastical peers*—the Archbishop of Rheims, the Bishops of Langres, Laon, Châlons, Beauvais and Noyon—the three former are *dukes*, the three latter *counts*, while all have their seats in the Parliament of Paris. Thus, too, the Bishop of Strasbourg and the Archbishop of Besançon are *princes*, and he of Cambrai, a *duke*. Many retain important feudal powers. Further still, most hold some considerable appointments: they are Councillors of State or Presidents of the Provincial States in their districts, or of one of the new Provincial Assemblies. Finally, together with the intendants, either side by side or in competition, they occupy themselves with general administration, the building of roads and bridges, the bringing of marshes and wastes into cultivation, with various ameliorations in the social and economic order. These activities, interesting in themselves, have often fortunate and fertile results; they involve a new conception of a bishop's duty which tends to recall him to his antique function of protector and benefactor of his flock in all fields. Contemporaries, however, did not look with great sympathy on this "itch for State business," or on all this administrative zeal, regarding it as an encroachment of the spiritual upon the temporal and an inadmissible transformation of the true episcopal mission.

The bishops and money

The bishops, or most of them, would undoubtedly have had more popularity if they had lived in less pomp and had abated fiscal exigencies which added greatly to the burdens borne by the people. They alone profited by these, as, in their capacity as *gros décimateurs* (*i.e.*, as highest beneficiaries of the tithe), they retained most of it. Even then they threw all that they could on the shoulders of the lower clergy, in the form of taxes imposed on the latter, the *tenths*, intended to pay for the *Gratuitous Donation.* This exaction, though quite in the spirit of the Ancien Régime, did them but little honour.

The ecclesiastica proletariat

There was thus an ecclesiastical proletariat, which was also a social proletariat in the sense that the lower clergy had no access to the higher appointments in the Church and were not even admitted to the Assemblies of the Clergy; a proletariat also in means, since the *portion congrue*—that is, the share of the tithe which was left for them when the *gros décimateurs* had taken their portion—allowed no more than a life of utter penury to priests and vicars who had nothing else. These lower clergy, too, generally looked down on by their superiors, hated the latter and that vigorously. At the end of the eighteenth century they did more than lament; they began to formulate positive claims and to organise for their furtherance. In 1779 the priests of Provence and those of Dauphiné, with the approbation of the Parliaments of their respective provinces, formed virtual trade-unions for professional defence. If the higher clergy retained a deep-seated loyalty for the crown, in accordance with the Gallicanism whose doctrines they commonly professed in their own interest, the lower clergy to a great majority were won over beforehand to the Revolution.

B. *The Nobility*

The Nobility owes its blood to the community. This obligation had become an illusion; the nobles who served in the army did not serve for nothing; yet this theoretical military duty largely exempted the second order of the nation from the payment of taxes and conferred on it numerous privileges of all kinds.

Diverse categories of nobles

For the rest there were, in fact, *several nobilities*, as there were several clergies, but in the former case degrees were less sharply differentiated since they were unconnected with any organisation.

1. The higher nobility

The *higher nobility* lived in close touch with the king, at the court or "in the household" of the princes of the blood. There they harvested good store of appointments, lucrative posts and pensions, and kept high state, at corresponding cost. The king's liberality was ordinarily insufficient to cover the cost of this life of luxury, pleasure and gambling, and the seigneurs were constantly running into debt.

2. The middle nobility

In the provinces lived nobles of two categories: one composed of men who, without such means as would allow them to make a figure at court, had enough on which to live comfortably, who might pass some years in the king's service by land or sea, and afterwards retire to their estates, some killing time according to their opportunities, others finding employment in agricultural work, in economic studies, then much in fashion, or in various intellectual distractions.

3. The little nobility

Below this *middle nobility* a *little nobility* vegetated on small incomes, and sometimes in great poverty, so great indeed that their standard of life was hardly higher than that of the peasants among whom they dragged out a miserable existence. The sons of these poor folk very rarely succeeded in making a career for themselves, whether in the army or in the Church, in neither of which could birth without money carry a man very far, and where all good appointments were monopolised by the nobility of the court.

Discontent among the nobility

As a whole, the nobility, though greatly devoted to the king, were far from satisfied with the political régime and many of them still less so with their own condition. Those in high place were ill-resigned to play no more active part in the government; the others complained of unrecognised merit, and of the contempt of the ennobled bourgeois who wielded authority on behalf of the prince; those in the lowest ranks came to lay the responsibility for the hardship of their lives on the government and the rapacious greater noblesse. Thus, for diverse reasons in each of its grades, the whole aristocracy demanded a change in the economy of the monarchy, whose despotism it found so burdensome; it demanded a new "organisation"; that is to say—in the last resort—a *constitution*. For the rest, a certain number of its members had undergone conversion to the new philosophic ideas and inclined to liberalism;

these will manifest much activity in the earlier period of the Revolution.

What remains of the feudal rights

The *feudal rights*, however, which the seigneurs of all ranks still wielded, bore heavily on the people of the countryside. They consisted of *various taxes* which affirmed the vassalship of the labourer, in *labour dues* which might represent on the average fifty days' work in the year, of *tolls*, established on bridges, roads and markets, *banalités* or dues attached to the obligatory use of an oven, a mill or a wine-press set up by the seigneur and so forth. Of those rights, some were anachronistic survivals from the privileges of *dominant feudality*, others resulted from agreements made between the seigneurs and their peasants and were attached, as it was said, to *contractual feudality*. The latter were more just than the former except for some cases where the contract, which determined them, had been imposed on the peasants and not accepted by their own free will.

4. The nobility of the robe

Side by side with the nobility by birth stood the administrative nobility, drawing nearer and mingling more and more with the former by marriage, comprising those who had risen to nobility from the services of the law and various categories of royal agents. The real parliamentary families which composed the great *nobility of the robe* are very rich and live an expensive life. They are no less arrogant and exclusive than the more illustrious lines of the "sword." On the eve of the Revolution several Parliaments (Rennes, Rouen, Grenoble) had decided to admit to their membership no person who had not at least four quarterings of nobility.

The spirit of parliamentary caste

These people, puffed up with their pretensions, believed themselves entitled to play a prominent political part in the realm. For the rest the Philosophers, whom they generally detested, accused them of ignorance, incompetence and injustice; they saw in their class, not without reason, the principal bulwark of abuses. Their *esprit frondeur* (spirit of habitual opposition towards the government) was popular with the people who credited them with a liberalism which in reality they entirely lacked; the opposition with which they worried and weakened the government was the expression merely of their own pretensions and caste selfishness. A few of them, however, had been captured by the new ideas, and accordingly protested, following Montesquieu, against the unbalanced absolutism and the unbridled despotism which so terribly vitiated not only the exercise of the royal justice but the whole public life of France. These men had embarked on the great current of opinion which was preparing the Revolution; their colleagues, obstinately conservative, were also preparing it by the resistance which they opposed to the working of the governmental machine and by their avowed intention to bring it under their own permanent control.

C. *The Third Estate*

The part of the Third Estate is to labour. To produce the food which all men need and to enable clerics and nobles to live as they like. In this it only imperfectly succeeds. This third order is no more homogeneous than the nobility or the clergy and distinctions must be drawn between the categories of individuals who compose it, at least between the *bourgeois, the traders and industrialists, the workmen, the peasants.*

1. The bourgeois

The bourgeois may be rich by the ownership of lands, or by commerce or industry which has returned him profit, or because he has become well-to-do in the service of the king, above all, in the mass of business relating to the *fisc.* The greatest bourgeois, living "in noble fashion" like great seigneurs, are financiers. Since the beginning of the century this higher bourgeoisie has constantly added to its wealth. It has been able, in consequence, to adopt a comfortable and sometimes magnificent manner of life; and in consequence has become interested in things of the mind. It was often well educated and open-minded; the Philosophers found their most numerous and best disciples among its ranks. Better than any other class, it analysed and summed up the political and social régime from which it was the principal sufferer, above all in self-respect; it is the most ardent advocate of reform. The mass of bourgeois, much inferior in means to these aristocrats of fortune and of business, may rival them in culture and share their opinions; what we know as the *liberal professions* are mainly recruited from their ranks. For this reason, the bourgeoisie is the most vital element of the Third Estate, the ripest for public life. But it must not be forgotten that it, too, forms a privileged class and is in no way disposed to favour the lower classes (*la canaille.*)

2. Merchants and manufacturers

The merchant and the manufacturer, following the rule which applies to all categories of individuals in this ill-organised society, are not of one type only. The greatest, which means the richest, acquire a personal influence of a highly profitable kind, and only the less potent are harassed and exploited by over-regulation, and its abuses. Finally, home trade, in the eighteenth century, appears to be less prosperous than foreign trade, and especially than trade on the great scale by sea.

Home trade; the obstacles it encounters

Home trade is confronted with a system of customs, which Necker justly characterised as of "*barbaric constitutions.*" In principle, each province had its own custom-houses where duties were payable by all merchandise in transmission from one province to another. As a matter of fact, at least since the time of Colbert, a certain number of provinces in the Centre and North of France had been amalgamated into a single customs zone which was known as the *Extension of the Five Great Farms.*[6] In this, duties were payable only on entry into or exit from the *Extension,* but other provinces retained their lines of individual custom-houses and these were *reputed foreign.* Some, relatively recently constituted, such as the Three Bishoprics, Alsace and Lorraine, known as *effectively foreign*, had custom-houses where they bordered on the realm and not where they bordered on the foreigner. When it is considered that, apart from the duties of these custom-houses, all merchandise in transmission had to pay toll after toll and duty after duty, municipal or seigneurial, it can be understood how, in spite of the remarkable development by the end of the century in ways of communication, home trade was still gravely hampered.

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[6] This name came from the fact that the raising of duties there had at first been given over to five financial companies. The *Extension* comprised Picardy, Normandy, Ile de France, Perche, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, Poitou, Aunis, Berry, Nivernais, Burgundy, Bresse, Bourbonnais, Beaujolais, Champagne.

Foreign trade

On the contrary, trade with India, with the countries of Barbary, with the Levant, the Antilles, with all the European States made a great stride forward under Louis XVI. In 1789, England was the only country which outstripped France in the value of her exports; the increase in these, since the death of Louis XV, amounted to over one hundred million livres a year. This most promising development might have been made both more active and more extensive by a bolder and above all a more stable commercial policy on the part of the government. Unfortunately, ministers never seemed able to make a final choice between the new ideas of free exchange and Colbert's old protectionism.

Various encouragements to industry

They nevertheless vividly realised that the prosperity of industry was in the interest of the king. They accordingly encouraged manufacturers by the old time-consecrated methods of premiums, subventions, loans, detailed instructions, honorific and profitable rewards. They likewise gave much attention to increasing the number of centres for technical education. Some great seigneurs, too, took interest in industrial enterprises: development of mines, forges, blast furnaces, various manufactures. This is a particular instance and, still more, a practical effect, of the attention given in that time, consequent on the labours of the Economists, to the problems of production and increase of wealth.

The regulation of work

Unfortunately the State did not intervene only to encourage and assist; it continued to regulate, and in doing so, hampered and retarded the initiatives which it had hoped to stimulate. After Turgot's disgrace, the organisation which he had destroyed had not been entirely re-established: the *corporations*, supervised and directed by the *Maîtrises* (councils of Masters) and maintained by the *Jurandes* (tribunals and committees of supervision for the corporations). An edict of April, 1777, while re-establishing the whole in principle, had in practice confined them to the towns and their environs and had further reduced the number of corporations by merging several into one.

Tendency towards liberty

The general tendency is evidently towards the industrial freedom dreamed of by Turgot, which by promoting competition would ensure progress: Necker in 1778, a royal ordinance in 1779, seemed to be making ready for the establishment of this happy freedom. But it was not yet to win the day, a fact the more unfortunate in that a new régime was called for owing to the rise of a new form of industry; namely, its *mechanical* form. The *machine*, which had transformed the economy of England since 1768,[7] had been introduced into France also, where it had, by an irresistible movement, created the *factory* and produced *large scale industrialists* who were to supplant the *small workshop* and the *small master*. The day of regulations which claimed to fix every detail of manufacture is really over, as is well proved by the substantial industrial development, accelerated under Louis XVI in proportion as the interference of the State becomes less harassing. Meanwhile, respect for the privileges of corporations, their bad habits included, deterred public authority from granting the freedom demanded by the economic interests and the more general aspirations of the

The advent of the machine and of large-scale industry

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[7] The spinning-machine of Arkwright dated from 1768; the slide-valve of Watt, an essential part of the steam-engine, from 1769. Cf. P. Mantoux, *La révolution industrielle au XVIIIe siècle. Essai sur les commencements de la grande industrie moderne en Angleterre, 1906.*

"business world." The condition of the workers must not be confounded with the prosperity of business. The advent of large-scale industry has been potent to introduce grave trouble into the organisation of work and the recruiting of labour; and, in fact, this trouble has already arisen and is marked by *crises* under which the manual labourers suffer. But as the transformation is still only in its infancy, the troubles of the taskmasters are due rather to the influences of the past than to those of the present.

3. The workmen, their condition

In the towns, the majority of trades are dependent on corporations, which are privileged entities and keep the workers under strict regulation; they regulate wages as they please. In the royal industries the workers are confined in barracks, regimented, subjected to a rigorous discipline; the same is done in many other factories; but this actual slavery is commonly counterbalanced by material benefits which at least keep the workers alive. The great peril which threatens the man who lives from hand to mouth is stoppage of work, far from rare in times when the machine is becoming indispensable. In the country many small workshops remain, and work at home still represents, for instance in all concerned with weaving, an appreciable part of production. The price is naturally regulated by the large producer; he can do this in such a way that the "home worker" cannot cover his expenses and must fall into poverty.

Their discontent

The manual labourers are certainly, on the whole, discontented with their lot; they complain, above all, of insufficient wages, but in these days it is difficult to know if they were always right, if, in fact, they were not mistaken in throwing the responsibility for their distress on the *masters who exploit them.* In many places we find that low wages are reinforced by payments in kind, and it is certain that economic crises —such, for instance, as that which developed after the first multiplication of machines—have much to do with the distress of the workers. Some realise this, for in times of excitement they break the mechanical engines, which they declare are taking the bread out of their mouths, and they normally tend to demand that the government should intervene to regulate work and enable every man to live by his labour.

Their resistance

Hatred of the machine and master, suspected of exploiting those whom he employs, and of enriching himself out of their poverty, is a sentiment which becomes acute among the working classes during the approach of the Revolution. Already it is seen expressed in deeds as well as in words. Associations of the workers are formed which endeavour to counteract the tyranny of the masters, by organising strikes, by opposing the dismissal of workers in the event of a stoppage, and their arbitrary discharge, man by man, in a normal time. The government naturally prohibits these coalitions and sets its face against these pretensions; but it acts without energy or conviction. When it intervenes it endeavours more often to end trade disputes peaceably than to settle them by force. It feels in so doing that it would be neither just nor prudent to do otherwise.

The urban proletariat

The great mass of labour lives in restriction, distress and hourly insecurity; in the great towns there is a proletariat exasperated by poverty and ready for anything. A horde of mendicants is continually recruited, all looking for a chance of making trouble.

4. The peasants

The peasant may be—in theory—a serf, day-labourer, farmer, *métayer* or landowner; the exact condition of each of these different classes is hard to appraise—contemporary witnesses present us with the strangest contradictions—we suspect, too, sweeping generalisations one way or the other or opinions based more on prejudice than on accurate observation.

The serfs and the mortmain labourers

Of serfage, properly so called, only a few traces remain; they are found especially in the mountains of the Jura, where the abbey of Saint-Claude owns three thousand five hundred serfs whom Voltaire tried hard, but failed, to set free. Side by side with the serfs there remained in the kingdom a million and a half of *mortmain labourers;* that is, of men bound to a seigneury or an estate, to such an extent as to be incapable of performing any act of civil life, for instance to marry without authorisation from their seigneur; they could make no will, their property at death was their seigneur's, and they could not leave the lands which they cultivated without being exposed to pursuit and recapture by force. Custom had indeed alleviated the rigour of the law in nearly all places: the mortmain labourer did, in fact, transmit property to children who lived with him; the right of pursuit and capture was unexercised; nevertheless 1,500,000 Frenchmen remained thus in a precarious, humiliating and miserable position. The king had appreciated this and, in 1779, abolished by edict mortmain on the crown lands (in the direct royal domain), but, while he suggested to the seigneurs that they should follow his example on their own lands, he did not feel it possible to compel them to do so and few adopted his suggestion.

The day-labourers

The *day-labourers*, agricultural workers employed and paid by the day, were very badly remunerated. Voltaire himself could write without a blush that it was advisable that want should compel them to work; that is to say, that they should not be able to earn more than a bare subsistence, so that they might be compelled to accept whatever work was offered.

The farmers and the *métayers*

The *farmers* leased land from the owners and cultivated it as they saw fit, subject to the payment of an agreed rent; the *métayers* cultivated theirs on *half-shares* with the owner; he provided part of the cost of cultivation, and they shared with him the whole of the return. Farming flourished only in Normandy, Picardy, Artois, Beauce; in all other districts *métayage* was dominant, and it was much less profitable to the peasant when the "land" which he cultivated was very small in extent.

Turgot stated that the métayer was always "*reduced to the least he could earn without dying of hunger.*"

The small landowners

Much land was owned by small peasant proprietors; the English traveller, Arthur Young, estimated it at a third of the realm. It was considerably increased in the eighteenth century, both by the breaking up of large estates and by extension through deforestation, drainage of marshes and the provision of small holdings and allotments from the communal properties. It must be noted that many so-called landowners are merely hereditary tenants, whose land is not free from rent payable to the real proprietor. It must also be remembered that many of these properties are too small to support even a single family.

The condition of the countrymen

It appears, on the whole, that the great mass of countrymen lived in constant anxiety and often in absolute penury. Yet there had been a substantial improvement since the end of the reign of Louis XIV, which became accentuated after the middle of the century; foreigners who visit the countryside of France are emphatic in praising its aspect of general prosperity and they are undoubtedly correct *relatively to the condition of other countries*. It must not be forgotten that Young, for instance, was fresh from Spain when he visited France. For the rest, possibly the peasant has so lively an impression that he is badly off because he is so much less so than he has been. However this may be, this impression is prevalent everywhere during the approach of the Revolution. Countrymen complain in particular of the exorbitant fiscal charges which weigh them down, of the seigneurs' abuses of such feudal rights as remain to them, of the *absenteeism* of their masters who no longer reside habitually on their estates, whenever their means permit them to live at court, but entrust their interests to ruthless intendants and spend their incomes unprofitably to their vassals; unlike the old days when they had lived among the latter.

Their degradation and ignorance

The reform of 1787 and its failure

In the meanwhile these peasants were still for the most part degraded and ignorant. The efforts made to add to the number of the *Little Schools* have been mentioned. It is pertinent also to remember that the reform of 1787 [8] provided for the establishment, in seventeen generalships, of *Municipal Assemblies*, one for each "commonalty" of inhabitants; that is, in the country, one for each parish. This assembly was to comprise, together with the seigneur and the parish priest, who are members by right, from three to nine members, with a *syndic*, their executive officer, elected by those among the inhabitants who pay at least ten francs in direct taxes, *of whatever estate or whatever condition they may be*. The powers of this assembly remained assuredly very small, and even more uncertain. But if it had regularly functioned it could not have failed to modify rather soon the inertia and the political blindness of the peasantry. Unfortunately this incomplete and incoherent reform, applied by the government without conviction and even without honesty, attacked tooth and nail by every privilege which it incommoded, also ill-served by the cowardice of the Assemblies themselves, was unsuccessful and was virtually abandoned by Necker as soon as October, 1788. Over the countryside roamed a sinister and dangerous population of mendicants, marauders, smugglers, *faux sauniers* (persons who smuggled salt), poachers, thieves, law-breakers of all kinds—a people apt for deeds of violence, whose existence should not be forgotten when an explanation is sought for the excesses which will be committed in the first months of the Revolution.

Law-breakers on the countryside

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[8] This reform was carried out, or at least intended, by the edict of June, 1787, "*for the formation of Provincial and Municipal Assemblies*" in all the Generalships where there are no Provincial States: the Notables, meeting in the same year of 1787, had obtained that considerable restriction, in conformity with the mania for *privilege* which was dominant at the time. The Assemblies of different degrees, purely consultative, were to take charge of the allocation of imposts and to ascertain the wishes of the populations, which they were then to co-ordinate and submit to the government.

Progress made; its insufficiency

Yet it would be an error to suppose that there was no difference between the France of the end and that of the beginning of the eighteenth century. Economic conditions have greatly improved, as is shown by the considerable increase in the population. The historians, to begin with the most illustrious, *Hippolyte Taine* (in his *Ancien Régime*), have too frequently made the mistake of not taking sufficiently into account the dates of the documents which they have employed, and they have consequently confused different epochs together. The general suffering, and, for the peasants, the appalling misery of the last twenty years of Louis XIV, are in fact, much diminished during the first fifteen years of Louis XVI. The kingdom seems to have embarked on its course of industrial and commercial success and its wealth is rapidly increasing.

Unfortunately this wealth is ill divided, and the share of the workers is still too restricted. The insufficient but indubitable amelioration in their lot, which the general progress has earned for them, has put them far in advance of their brethren in neighbouring countries, but has mainly resulted in making them more acutely conscious of their needs and more desirous to satisfy them completely. At the same time the march of ideas and the evolution of morals are unfriendly to a social system so full of scandalous inequalities, and of abuses no less obnoxious to reason than offensive to humanity. All circumstances, beginning with the successive capitulations of the government, lead to the conclusion that a profound and radical transformation in society is perforce impending and cannot be long delayed.

IV

The state of public opinion

Most commonly, enlightened men, who see clearly that things go worse in the realm than they ought to go, lay the main blame on the government. Its *principle* (absolutism by right divine) seems to them obsolete and insensate; its *practice*, based on respect for all the incoherent lumber of the past, on an opportunism, in which arbitrary decisions and ineffectual bluster only thinly mask a determination to yield no jot or tittle of authority in the face of claims that become more and more insistent, seems to them intolerable; its *results*, political and social distemperature, administrative tyranny, fiscal oppression of the lower classes, and finally the ruin of public finance, bring the whole system in their sight into discredit and condemnation. For this reason they demand an *organization of the monarchy;* that is to say, a constitution, and an end to arbitrary government and privilege.

The point of view of the enlightened

(a) No republican party

There is, however, in France *no republican party*—there are not even any *republican ideas.* Reform is demanded by public opinion from the king, the father of his people, at present ill advised, ill informed, who, when he knows and understands, will be able to make all things go well. He has kept his prestige among men accustomed to regard him as the source of all authority, and who, also, display a somewhat naïve confidence in the efficacy of laws and decrees to change institutions and even to modify manners and morals. There are few indeed who begin to realise that in undermining the divine right and the Catholic faith, in attacking the Church which upholds the throne, the Philosophers, without wishing to do so, are breaking the road for the Republic.

(b) No democratic party

Neither is there a democratic party and no democratic ideas. When, at that time, I repeat it, political theorists speak of the *people* and its rights, they think only of bourgeois, landowners, men of the *skilled workmen* type; that is to say, artisans who are fairly well-to-do and have some education. They look down on all the others whom they call the *canaille* (mob). Yet these very men had announced, without any misgivings, the future reign of democracy on the day when they proclaimed *the natural equality of all mankind* and recognised *the natural rights* to which all are entitled.

(c) No real national sentiment

The nation has not yet become conscious of itself; the individualism of the provinces is still strongly asserted. Many of them habitually show themselves far more concerned to consolidate their individual privileges than to promote the interest of the kingdom. Thus Brittany eagerly brings forward the contract of marriage of the Duchess Anne, wife of Charles VIII, and of Louis XII; Flanders clings above all things to its municipal franchises; Lorraine looks back regretfully to its dukes and desires to remain *a foreign province.* The people of Franche-Comté, Provence, Béarn and elsewhere attach more importance to their provincial patriotism than to their duty as Frenchmen; others maintain that they have the right to confirm and to revise on their own account the decisions of the States-General. Yet fellowship in misery and desire for change are silently building up a union of sentiment. In several of the *cahiers* (memoranda) which the deputies are soon to bring with them to the States-General, which set forth the desires of their electors, occur appeals for the unity, the solidarity, the common action and the union of the provinces, if need be through the sacrifice of the egoistic interests of particularism.

Conclusion

It is by the will, it may even be said by the revolt, of the privileged classes (Clergy, Parliaments, Notables), that the king has been compelled to consult the States-General and so has fixed the date of the Revolution which had now become inevitable since every attempt at reform had failed and the state of affairs was becoming daily more unbearable. The court wished to confine the competence of the Assembly to the financial question alone and to regulate its working by the old usages, to impose, for instance, the separate deliberation of the deputies of the three orders. But while it might retard the actual start of the revolutionary movement by the energetic use of the forces at its disposal, it was soon to find itself powerless to arrest it when it had once begun, *almost in spite of itself*. Everything is so interconnected in the decaying political and social fabric that the smallest serious reform at a single point must destroy the equilibrium of the whole and bring it crashing to the ground.

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CHAPTER XXVII

THE REVOLUTION: FROM ABSOLUTE MONARCHY TO CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

I

The States-General

A. ***What the States-General represent***

For the privileged

For the king and his ministers

For the "patriots"

THE convocation of the States-General was generally welcomed with enthusiasm, and with an outburst of gratitude to the king, who now at last had allowed his people to lay their grievances and miseries before him. Yet it soon became evident that those who had demanded this appeal to the representatives of "the Nation" were not in agreement as to what they really were to represent or to do. For most of the privileged orders, who simply reincarnated the spirit of the Fronde, it was necessary for the States, above all things, to weaken the king's authority, and transfer to themselves the means of exercising a decisive influence in public affairs; for them there was no question of any diminution of their privileges; these, on the contrary, had to be confirmed and, if need be, extended. For the king, his ministers and the civil service, which represented the monarchic organisation of Louis XIV, the States had nothing to do but to deal with the financial deficit and to prevent its recurrence by appropriate fiscal measures. But for educated men, enlightened by reading the Philosophers and the Politicals, for liberals already becoming known as the "patriots," the task laid upon the deputies was no less than the complete reorganisation of the kingdom and its adaptation, point by point, to new ideas and present needs.

B. ***Method of holding the Assembly***

Thus it followed that the privileged orders and the king desired an Assembly elected and held under the old forms in use in 1614: one deputy of each order for every bailiwick, three

For the privileged and the king

For the "patriots"

separate deliberative chambers for general decisions, one for each order, and a vote for each order. The "patriots" justly objected that with such a system no substantial reform had ever been accomplished and that on this occasion the result was bound to be the same. Nor, further still, did they overlook the fact that, in 1614, the Third Estate, in the districts of States, had been appointed by the States themselves, that elsewhere the municipalities of the towns had been themselves the electors, so that the people proper had played only an accessory part in the elections. Finally, they called attention to the fact that in the *Provincial Assemblies*, instituted in 1787, the Third Estate had the advantage of *double numbers;* that is to say, that it had by itself as many deputies as the other two orders put together.

The question of *double numbers* for the Third Estate and of the *vote for each member*

The Parliament, the Notables, summoned by Necker (in 1788), the princes of the blood in a memorandum to the king which was made public on the 12th of December, and in which they heaped one sinister prediction upon another, pronounced themselves in favour of the thesis of the privileged. Thus when Necker, halting at a lame compromise, had accorded to the Third Estate the *double numbers* demanded by the "patriots," but did not follow this with its indispensable complement, *a vote for each man*, instead of a vote for each order, this simple and, in itself, inoffensive concession was the signal for a violent resistance by the privileged orders.

The provincial agitation

There was lively agitation in Provence, Béarn, Burgundy, Artois, Franche-Comté and, above all, in Brittany, where there was bloodshed. The privileged were unable to check it; there were deep divisions among them, and conspicuous defections[1] from their ranks, while, above all, the government, having small reason to favour them, gave them no support, and intervened only listlessly to curb the disturbances which they had provoked. The principal interest of the conflict is, for us, its clear witness to the truth that *the real question at issue is far more social than political,* and what was preparing was a war between the Third Estate and the two privileged orders, far more than any attack on the royal despotism.

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[1] For instance, in Franche-Comté twenty-two seigneurs openly declared their acceptance of the duplication of the Third Estate, and of equality before the law and taxation. In several other districts the lesser nobility, in retaliation for the contempt of the great, withdrew from the side of the latter.

C. *The preparations for the States-General.* Economic crisis

For the rest, the year was a bad one. A commercial treaty concluded with England in 1786, which had lowered the duties paid on imported English goods, had enabled them to invade the French market. At short notice, the production of goods, particularly textiles, had had to be restricted and a large number of workmen were thrown out of work (20,000 at Lyons, 12,000 at Abbeville and similarly elsewhere). The harvest of 1788, both in cereals and fodder, had been much below the normal, causing great suffering to the peasants and the poor. For these reasons, *popular commotions* nearly everywhere in the kingdom occurred during the first months of 1789. Evoked by famine and directed in the first place against those whom rumour declared, rightly or wrongly, to be monopolising food, they were amplified as soon as the electoral campaign (March) began, because the Assemblies which were preparing for the elections had been invited to state their grievances and embody them in writing in *cahiers* (memorials). Furthermore, the press, which had been practically free since the beginning of the year, poured out a deluge of criticisms and suggestions, which enabled the discontented without difficulty to connect effects with causes.

Riots which it produced

The elections

The two first orders held their meetings in the chief town of each bailiwick. They were often hard put to it to agree, such was the animosity of the lesser nobles against the greater and of the lower clergy against the higher. The Third Estate at first met according to quarters or parishes; it was these assemblies that drew up the *Cuhiers de doléances* (memorials of grievances) of the parishes and that chose the *electors*, that held the *Assemblei de bailliage* (Assembly of the bailiwick), and that nominated the assemblés deputies. Those elected were, for the most part, lawyers and publicists, the remainder being well-to-do bourgeois, merchants or agriculturists.[2]

The *Cahiers* Their claims

The *Cahiers de doléances* (memorials of grievances) drawn up by the electoral assembles, many of which are still extant, make it certain that the three orders agree in condemning despotism, in demanding a *Constitution*, guarantees against arbitrary autocracy, the right of periodical meetings for the States-General. This point established, there remain notable divergencies between the different memorials; not only such as arise from the provincial or even local particularism, to whose persistence I have already incidentally referred, but also such graver divergencies as relate to oppositions of interest between the three orders. They cannot be dealt with in detail here. It can only be said that each party is quite agreeable to the abolition of the privileges of the other as long as it keeps its own.[3] Nevertheless, the memorials of the two first orders accepted the principles of fiscal equality, a great gain, since such an equality must involve many more far-reaching concessions.

Timidity of the social claims made

It is, meanwhile, interesting to observe that social privileges, the privileges of class or caste, are not the object of any systematic attack even on the part of the Third Estate. In places where the lower classes have a direct voice in debate—

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[2] The nobility were represented by 242 gentlemen and 28 Parliamentarians, the clergy by 48 prelates, 35 abbots of monasteries, all drawn from the higher clergy, and 208 curés, a fact which shows the preponderance of the lower clergy in the elections. The Third Estate amounted to 578 deputies, 2 priests, 12 nobles—for instance, Mirabeau, elected by the Third Estate of Aix and Marseilles—13 municipal magistrates, 102 magistrates of bailiwicks, 212 advocates, 16 doctors, 100 merchants, agriculturists and others.

[3] For instance, the Nobility and the Third Estate would find no difficulty in agreeing to devote the property of the Church to the payment of the public debt.

that is to say, in the Assemblies of the rural parishes—personal preoccupations and their accompaniments run counter to principles. Elsewhere it was the "masters" of corporations, the industrialists, the traders, the bourgeoisie, in short, who guided the pen and were intent, like the others, more on immediate realities than on claims merely theoretical.

Persistent loyalism

Nowhere is any attack on royalty or the king to be met with. A contemporary claims to have read, in a memorandum from the East of the kingdom, after the enumeration of the demanded reforms, the threatening words, "*and if our lord the king refuses, to depose him.*"[4] This memorandum has never been found. This much, however, can be said, that nothing of the kind is to be met in the others, that it must in any case unquestionably have been an exception, and that the memoranda in general express ardent loyalty and the greatest confidence in the prince.

D. *The Declaration of the 27th of December, 1788*

The government, by the *Deliberation of the Royal Council* of the 27th of December, 1788, had laid down in advance a sufficiently extensive programme of work for the States-General. It involved the study of the following questions: reform of taxation; the establishment of a budget; periodical meetings of the States-General; suppression of privileges in fiscal affairs; legislation concerning the press and individual liberty. Such were truly the points which mainly attracted the attention of the most moderate of the malcontents in the three orders. In the course of the first four months of the year 1789, however, the very men who had drawn up this programme had gradually changed their views, and, repenting their liberalism, desired, at the beginning of May, that the States should confine themselves to the examination of financial questions. But, by that time, *public opinion* was let loose. A swarm of newspapers and pamphlets raised question after question in prepa-

The intentions of the government in May, 1789

Public opinion: How it prepares for the action of the States ration for discussion in the Assembly.[5] Petitions and manifestoes were circulated: meetings were organised at which abuses were enumerated, one after another, and remedies for them discussed. In Paris, the Duke of Orléans, true to the old tradition among the king's collaterals, aspired to lead or at least to inspire the reformers, and gave them encouragement. In the provinces the king's agents, by order of Necker, let matters take their course. Some haphazard prosecutions, which Parliament conceded, were pitiable failures. Altogether, when the States met (May 5) they were free neither to do nor to decide as they wished; no freer was the government: a strength greater than their own was urging them forward, that of a will which was growing more and more sure of itself.

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[4] *"Et si le sire roi refuse, le déroiter."*

E. *The king and his entourage*

Louis XVI, mediocre in mind and irresolute in character, deceitful as the weak tend to be, and at the mercy of an entourage incapable of grasping the real facts of the situation, was by no means the man for such difficult times, or one sensible enough to make in due season and with frankness such concessions as were needful while firmly and resolutely resisting undue encroachments. His time was to be passed in reluctant surrenders and in vain attempts to recover surreptitiously the rights which he has thus abandoned. Nor will it be long before the queen, the Count of Provence and the Count of Artois—the two brothers of Louis XVI—and the whole of the courtiers, assume an attitude of blind opposition to reforms and do their utmost to make them odious to the monarch. The intrigue of the time of Turgot is revived, but on a greater scale.

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[5] Many of these brief writings show by their titles alone the persistent importance of provincial particularism; such as: *Avis aux bons Normands* by Thouret, *Appel à la nation provençale* by Mirabeau, *Appel à la nation artésienne* by Robespierre; though many took higher ground. A tract of the Abbé Siéyès in particular has remained memorable. Its plan amounts to a whole programme: *"Qu'est-ce que le Tiers—État?—Tout—Qu'a-t-il-été jusqu'ici dans l'ordre politique?—Rien—Que demande-t-il?—A être quelquechose."* (What is the Third Estate? Everything. What has it been until now in the political order? Nothing. What does it ask? To be something.)

II

The first stage of the Revolution (May 5-June 27, 1789)

The first stage of the Revolution (May 5-June 27, 1789) is marked by two cardinal developments: *the Nation becomes conscious of itself; the principle of sovereignty passes from the King to the Nation.*

A. *The Nation awakens*

Necker wished the States to hold their meetings in Paris, but the king pronounced for Versailles, not wishing to be far from his "hunting." The opening ceremony, appointed for the 1st of May, was delayed for five days because the hall was not ready for the Assembly. The deputies, who had begun to arrive in the last days of April, met one another in the taverns and streets of the royal town; they made acquaintance, conversed, exchanged memorials, and quickly became assured that, whatever were the particular demands which each might put forward, all were imbued with a similar desire for general reform; they grasped the fact that their real task was to realise the common aspirations of their constituents. Thus it came to pass that *the will of France took the place of that of each province in the mind of the representatives*, at least in those of the Third Estate and the lesser clergy; the confusion so long maintained by loyalism and local patriotism was cleared away and the Nation emerged to stand face to face with the King.

The first impressions of the Third Estate

The tactlessness of the prince and his government gave the finishing touch to the work which personal intercourse between the deputies had initiated. While the representatives of the clergy and the nobility received flattering signs of official deference, those of the Third Estate were treated without consideration and almost with contempt; they were to be made to feel the inferiority of their condition and to be kept in their place. Throughout the first sitting presided over by the king, the deputies heard no word of anything but finance and taxes;

it seemed that they had been convoked merely to consider the ways and means by which the public purse could be replenished. No member of the government seemed to give a thought to any reform. That is why, on the very evening of the day of inauguration, those of the Third Estate held meetings by provinces and passed identical resolutions to work for the abolition of the old procedure by orders and *to demand a vote for each member in a single Chamber.*

The verification of powers

This resolution was first applied in connection with *the verification of powers*, a matter in which the Third Estate claimed to act in concert with the Clergy and the Nobility, on behalf of all delegates without distinction. Neither the two privileged orders nor the king would consent to this course. Next, after a month of discussion and fruitless endeavour, the deputies of the Third Estate, regarding themselves as a majority of the national representatives, decided to proceed to a general reckoning of all bailiwicks and to verify the powers of their deputies (June 12); at this point the parish priests began to rally to their side. On the 17th of June they proclaimed that they were a *National Assembly:* the nation thus constituted stood face to face with royalty; by the affirmation that the king was not entitled to oppose any decision of the Assembly, it virtually abolished the right divine and made its own will the foundation and chief factor of government. It may be said, in short, that through a single phrase the monarchy established by Louis XIV had been overthrown and *sovereignty had changed hands.*

B. *The transfer of sovereignty*

The States proclain themselves *National Assembly* (June 17)

Oath of the "Jeu de Paume" (June 20)

This display of energy convinced the clergy and they voted for union with the Third Estate on the 19th of June; in the Chamber of the Nobility, a strong minority (nearly one-third) favoured a similar course. The queen and the court persuaded the king to attempt to break this dangerous resistance by a stroke of authority. He announced that he would declare his will at a *royal sitting* on the 23d of June, under the pretext of preparing for which, he meanwhile closed the great hall where meetings were held. The deputies, now "*recognised and verified,*" finding it closed on the 20th, met in the Jeu de Paume (tennis-court), a huge hall not far away. There they deliberated and, on the proposal of Mounier, one of their members, made oath not to separate until they had given a constitution to France.[6] Notwithstanding that this motion was passed with cries of *Vive le Roi!* it was none the less consecrating the true opening of the Revolution (June 20).

The royal session (June 23)

At a "royal session" from which Necker absented himself, because, without approving the Assembly, he advocated concessions, the king caused a Declaration to be read, annulling the resolution passed by the deputies on the 17th of June, and made an imperious speech which caused much indignation. He hinted, though he did not explicitly threaten, a dissolution, and he concluded with a formal command that the three orders should separate and deliberate apart. The privileged orders obeyed; but the Third Estate kept their seats when the king had retired, and by the mouth of their president, Bailly, declared that the "*Assembly*" could not "*receive commands.*" The king, having been informed of this resistance, and possibly already repenting an energetic attitude so little in key with his character, was nevertheless about to send his guard to deal with the deputies, when liberal members of the Nobility resisted and barred the way of the soldiers; he yielded forthwith and said merely, '*Well, well, let them stay.*" Meanwhile, the Assembly decided to adhere to its previous resolutions and proclaimed itself inviolable.

The meeting of the three Orders

Next day, the majority of the Clergy joined them afresh. On the next day again, forty-seven deputies of the Nobility, the Duke of Orléans among them, in their turn joined the joint session; the two Chambers of the privileged, little by little, were to become emptier and emptier through a series of individual defections, or risk some stroke of violence from the people, whose irritation against the two Chambers was mounting rapidly. On the other hand, the Royal Council had come to consider that the presence in the Assembly of elements from among those most hostile to the reform movement could not but make it more moderate. These reasons decided Louis XVI to invite his "*faithful Clergy*" and his "*faithful Nobility*" to do him the urgent service of joining the Third Estate. The meeting was held to the acclamations of the crowd with cries of *Vive le Roi!* in a general outburst of delight; royalty had none the less capitulated before the disobedience of the *Communes* [7] (June 27).

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[6] Only one of those present, Martin Dauch, member for Castelnaudary (in the present department of the Aude), refused to take the oath.

III

The Assembly, the king, the people

A. *The king's attempt to use force*

It need hardly be said that the king was far from being whole-heartedly reconciled to so great a humiliation. No sooner had he submitted than he prepared to retaliate, and, on the 26th of June, gave the necessary orders for the massing round Paris of an imposing military force, mainly composed of foreign regiments, whom he believed more dependable and more devoted to his person than others, and less unlikely to hesitate if ordered to disperse the Assembly and deal with its partisans. But the entry of the people of Paris on the scene nullified this plan to crush the Revolution.

Entry on the scene of the people of Paris

The Duke of Orléans had thrown open his gardens of the Palais-Royal to the "patriots" and to the Assembly of Electors, that is to say, to the four hundred electors of the second degree, who had nominated the deputies of Paris. There they held daily meetings and free discussions on the proceedings of the court, which they followed with close attention. They started to organise a Bourgeois Guard, at the same time endeavouring to draw the garrison of Paris to their side, particularly *the regiment of the French Guards.* The arrival of the foreign regiments at Saint-Cloud, at Sèvres, at Saint-Denis, at the Champ de Mars, provoked lively feelings in the capital and a firmly worded protest from the Assembly. Louis XVI replied that the troops were there merely as guardians of order and of the Assembly itself, but if this was unacceptable he was ready to transfer "*the States-General*" to Noyon or Soissons while he himself would proceed to Compiègne "*to maintain communications*" (July 10). Next day, he secretly dismissed Necker and formed a government under the direction of the Count of Breteuil, a man of the court and a bitter reactionary. It is probable that signs of growing defection among the troops decided him to cut short his enterprise, though at the moment he had not collected more than ten thousand soldiers.

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[7] This term had been employed by the Third Estate to designate themselves before the adoption of the denomination of *National Assembly*. It shows the degree to which the deputies were haunted by the image of the liberties of England. It was thought to be a translation of the English expression of the "Commons."

Dismissal of Necker

The effect in Paris

When the news of Necker's dismissal reached Paris, in spite of all endeavours to keep it back, on the 12th of July at noon, its first result was a panic in the business world. The Bourse was closed: the alarm quickly spread throughout the city. A brawl, insignificant in itself, with a squadron of Royal German cavalry resulted in decisive action: the people pillaged the armourers' shops; on the 13th they rushed the Hôtel des Invalides, where muskets and some guns were stored; the Bourgeois Guard was organised. At the same time, a *Permanent Committee* of the Assembly of Electors took up its quarters in the Hôtel de Ville. The National Assembly, on its side, after declaring that Necker bore with him the regrets of the nation, and that the new ministers would be held responsible for any untoward results, also went into permanent session.

Inaction of the government

It is surprising to us today that the royal government should have allowed the Parisians time to organise and that it did not resolutely employ force from the first. The principal reason for this remissness is, no doubt, to be found in the native irresolution of the king, his incapacity for any energetic initiative and in the doubts as to the fidelity of the troops aroused among his entourage by the events of the previous days. It is certain that to venture on the use of force would have involved great danger. It thus came to be the people of Paris who boldly took the initiative and had recourse to force in their own cause and that of the National Assembly.

The 14th of July

On the 14th of July the *Bastille*,[8] considered as the symbol of despotism as being supremely the *State prison*, was attacked and captured by the new *Parisian militia* and the people, with the help of the French Guards. The king had not dared to set his troops in motion at the beginning of the tumult, nor did he dare to do so later when he was informed of the sack of the Bastille, the murders of the governor, de Launay, and of the Provost of the Merchants, Flesselles. He recoiled from the risk of street fighting, more particularly as numbers were no longer on his side. For this reason, on the 15th of July he came to the Assembly to ask them to assist him in re-establishing order, removed the foreign troops to a distance and recalled Necker. Those who had urged him to break the Revolution by force of arms endeavoured to induce him to leave Versailles and to seek refuge in Metz, where he might reunite his army and recover his advantage. He hesitated and, in the end, refused. The night between the 16th and the 17th, however, saw the beginning of the *émigration;* that is to say, the flight from the kingdom of those who thought themselves now unsafe or who foresaw the establishment of a régime which they would find unbearable. The Count of Artois, the king's brother, set the example, followed by the Princes of Condé and

Attitude of Louis XVI

The beginnings of the *émigration*

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[8] It had been in early days the Porte Saint Antoine, one of the gates of the fortifications of Paris; it had become a real fortress in the time of Charles V and had since received several considerable improvements. It was popularly believed to be full of political prisoners and victims of "letters of cachet"; in reality no more than seven prisoners were confined in it at that time.

Conti, the families of Polignac, Rohan, Broglie, Barentin, Breteuil and a number of seigneurs, prelates, higher parliamentarians and great ladies. Possibly they were not unaccompanied by hopes that, beyond the borders of France, some way might be found of restoring the régime which the incurable indecision of the king had permitted his rebellious subjects to overthrow.

Popular victory

Paris organised; the Assembly of Electors nominated a *Mayor*, Bailly, and a Commander of the Municipal Militia, La Fayette. On the 16th a deputation of the Assembly proffered thanks to its saviours, on the 17th Louis XVI declared in person his acceptance of the accomplished fact; he came to Paris and was received at the Hôtel de Ville by the new municipality; he made a short speech of which the first words were: "*Gentlemen, I am well satisfied.*" He thought it advisable to appear as though he were. In reality, as Jefferson, the American, an eye-witness, has stated, in so doing he had made to the Parisians "*an amende honourable such as no sovereign had ever before made nor any people received.*"

Excesses committed

The popular revolt had not run its course without falling into some excesses. Several prominent personages who, rightly or wrongly, had incurred odium, were brutally put to death. One man whose name will occur again, Babeuf, drew an extremely just conclusion from these regrettable acts of violence: "*The punishments of every kind, quartering, torture, the wheel, the stake, the gibbet, the executioners, multiplied on all sides, have made our manners rather rough; our masters instead of civilising us have made us barbarous because they are so themselves. They are reaping and will reap what they have sown.*" The Revolution, begun in enthusiasm and earnest desire for peace, had proved that in popular brutality it was bringing a force to bear which was both formidable and singularly uncontrollable. True wisdom would never have allowed it to be unchained.

Provincial agitation

Events in Paris had an immediate repercussion in the provinces. The towns provided themselves with new municipalities more or less analogous to that of Paris and organised a *National Guard* which seized on fortified places and stores of arms. The royal administration and authority, military as well as civil, almost everywhere gave way and allowed matters to take their course.

"The war on the châteaux"

In the country districts there was a violent and confused upheaval beginning with attacks made *in the name of the king* upon châteaux and feudal privileges. Most frequently the peasants were satisfied with burning the *charters* and parchments which they believed to be the causes of their misery. But in places where they met with resistance to their demands, especially where the seigneur had made himself hated, they burned dwellings and molested individuals. In several places there were killings. Then a rumour became current that bands of brigands were overrunning the country and spreading ravage in their train; none were actually seen anywhere, but everywhere they were suspected, or expected to turn up at any moment. The outrages on châteaux, on custom-house barriers, on forestallers of foodstuffs, and the pillages which occurred in diverse places, disseminated and magnified by popular report, gave substance to these illusions. This extreme perturbation was known as *the Great Fear.* The country folk gave it a permanent memorial in much of the spontaneous organisation of their towns; it led the peasants, too, to arm themselves.

The "Great Fear"

B. *The impressions of the Assembly*

The Assembly, exclusively composed either of the privileged or the bourgeois, had not welcomed with any pleasure this uprising of the *canaille* (mob). It saw with alarm the imminence of *an actual class war:* in many districts, bands of peasants had attracted workmen from the towns by the prospect of prompt and direct action *against the propertied classes* to such an extent that many a bourgeois municipality—municipalities could not yet be other than bourgeois—had despatched its bourgeois guard against the rioters; and some sanguinary encounters had ensued. The deputies, unbalanced by the unforeseen uproar aroused, were anxious for the re-establishment of order that they might apply themselves in peace to their urgent task, the drafting of the Constitution. Most of them, obsessed by the current faith in the virtue of violence, desired a repression by force; but the more politic won the day and succeeded in making their faith in legal measures prevail.

The Night of the 4th of August

They believed that they were conceding enough to allay the agitation of the country folk, when, on the *Night of the 4th of August*, and on the proposal of the Viscount of Noailles, brother-in-law of La Fayette, they passed a measure abolishing the most vexatious of the feudal rights,[9] the redemption of others by the Communes and the suppression in principle of all fiscal privileges. The measure was carried amid intense enthusiasm and was accompanied by touching "patriotic" declarations. As a modern historian has written: "*The august abjuration of the past proceeded throughout the night. By sunrise a new France had been brought into existence by the forcible intervention of the mob.*"

Federative spirit

A new France for the countless distinctions and divisions which parcelled out the old one had vanished, national unity had replaced the dispersions of the Ancien Régime, and the principles of equality in respect of taxation and of the abolition of feudalism, with the end of caste organisation—announced the liberation of the community from the fetters of its past. The spirit of particularism disappeared, yielding place in all parts to its opposite, the *federative spirit*. By the end of 1789 *federations* were being formed between town and town in each province and, soon after, between province and province, among festivities and rejoicings; they strove to compensate for the decentralisation by which the communes were set apart and to contravene anti-revolutionary effort. Their nat-

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[9] All were abolished by the Convention on the 17th of July, 1793.

The festival of the Federation (July 14, 1790)

ural goal was *the Great National Federation*, an outward and visible sign of the unity of the fatherland, which was to bring together, in one of the most striking outbursts of enthusiasm witnessed by the Revolution, all the delegates of the federations of France in a meeting in Paris on the *Champ de Mars*, the never-to-be-forgotten festival of the 14th of July, 1790. Louis XVI derived great encouragement to pursue his anti-revolutionary dealings from this festival in which he had played his part and been offered marks of deep respect and devotion.

Persistence of monarchic sentiments

The double movement of resistance to the reaction of the counter-revolutionaries had been in appearance *altogether monarchic*. The king's entourage was still justifiably suspect to the "patriots," but respect for the prince's person and confidence in himself were not yet seriously undermined. Public opinion believed him sincere in his protestations of love for his people and devotion to the Constitution; the Constitution was talked of as a reality long before it was ever drawn up. The peasants had assaulted the châteaux to shouts of *Vive le Roi!* and the Assembly conferred on Louis XVI the honourable title, unluckily ill deserved, of *the Restorer of freedom to France*.

Persistent difficulties

But these sentimental effusions were impotent to overcome difficulties which always grew greater. Merely to embody in practical measures the touching decisions of the night of the 4th of August involved protracted discussions and, when a settlement was reached, the peasants proved dissatisfied with what their plain common sense regarded as the incompleteness and insufficiency of the concessions. And this the more so, in that the embodiment in actual measures of the first fine unselfish fervours had seriously dampened their generous indiscretions, while the number of feudal rights for redemption had increased as those to be purely and simply suppressed had diminished, and redemption costs had grown heavier. Agitation

The anxieties of the deputies

and trouble consequently persisted in the countryside, and the Assembly, uneasy and anxious in face of the popular forces barely held in check by the bourgeois militia, was tossed to and fro between its duty of founding the new organisation of the kingdom upon principles conformable to those of reason and of *philosophy* and its desire to protect property, capital and the social position of *owners* against the claims of the lower classes.

For this reason it resolved, not without some debate,[10] to record and affirm the results obtained by the people together with the fundamental principles of every human society in a *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, which was destined to remain merely theoretical, and to organise in the *Constitution* a practical and political system excluding the people from actual public life.

C. *Declaration of the Rights of Man.* Its intentions and contents

The *Declaration* was passed on the 27th of August. It was jointly inspired by the ideas of the Philosophers, whose pupils so many of the deputies were, and by the circumstances. It expressed principles intended to embody the unchangeable laws and teachings of Nature, and simultaneously consecrated prejudices and consolidated interests which had little indeed of *Nature* about them. By its Article 3 it declared the Ancien Régime abolished: *The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No association, no individual, can exercise authority which does not expressly emanate from the nation.* By Article 6: *The law is the expression of the general will. . . . It must be the same for all. . . . All citizens are equal in its eyes.* In regard to the liberty and equality of all men it made the fundamental affirmations on which all modern States are based (Art. 1): *Men are born and remain free and equal as to their rights. . . .* (Art. 2-1: *The object*

[10] A large number of deputies demanded that a *Declaration of Duties* should accompany that of *Rights*. The motion was thrown out by a majority of only 137 votes out of 1003 recorded. The word *Duties*, it may be added, is associated with that of *Rights* in the Preamble of the *Declaration*.

of every political association is the conservation of the natural and indefeasible rights of man (Art. 7): *No man may be accused, arrested or detained except in circumstances determined by the law and according to the forms which it has prescribed. . . .*

But real equality is subordinated to *common utility* (Art. 1). It recognises (Art. 11) *the free communication of thought and opinion, as one of the most precious rights of man*, but it provides that *the abuse of this liberty* shall be limited by law; or, in other words, it subjects the freedom of the press to the opinion of the legislator. While declaring (Art. 10) that *no person may be disturbed for his opinions, even those on religion*, it clearly provided that the *expression* of these opinions was to be regulated by law in the interest of *public order*. This in itself was disquieting, as it could be taken to foreshadow intentions of maintaining a State Church in conformity with the spirit of the Philosophers. *Property* was included among natural and inalienable rights, as was natural with a propertied majority, regardless of the mass of Frenchmen who were without property and regardless also of the recent breach of this principle in the inroads made upon feudal property by this same majority.

Its true spirit

The Declaration was, in fact, much more a thing of its own day than its authors thought it. It mirrored their own state of mind and was neither so strictly logical nor so complete an embodiment of absolute truth as they possibly thought it was, yet it provided a categorical revolutionary creed not only for France but for the whole world.

The king in face of the *Declaration*. The question of *veto*

Nevertheless, and to begin with, it was necessary to secure its acceptance by the king, no more favourably inclined to it than, previously, to the decisions of the night of the 4th of August. The deputies disagreed as to the weight to be given to his sanction and the need for the latter. Some thought it necessary, others considered it superfluous; the question, in fact, was that of the royal *veto*. On the 11th of September, after a fiery debate, the Assembly decided that the king should receive a suspensive *veto* for two sessions; that is to say, that he should have a right to refuse his sanction to any law for two successive sessions of the National Assembly. The movers of this motion had agreed with the ministers that Louis XVI would sanction the decrees of the 4th of August in return for the important concession thus made him; but he dragged on and on without coming to a decision and on the 14th of September he started to recall to Versailles some regiments whom he felt he could trust.

The king returns to the idea of a stroke of force

Agitation of Paris

The Parisians, already much excited over the question of *veto*, immediately began agitation. A dearth of corn, that year very grievous, gave a legitimate pretext for public gatherings while it embittered existing discontents. Alarmist reports, too, readily found credence. The Assembly saw the appearance of *parties; moderates*, centred on Mounier, opposed *patriots* under Barnave. Mirabeau [11] carried on underhand intrigues with the object of substituting the Duke of Orléans for Louis XVI on the throne. La Fayette [12] himself seemed to be waiting and seeking for a chance to play in France the part of Washington in the United States.

The Days of the 5th and 6th of October

A fresh stroke of force under the auspices of the court seemed imminent; a report was current—not unfounded—that the king contemplated removing both the Assembly and himself from Paris. The temper of the patriotic newspapers grew hot. An indiscretion of the court hastened the consummation of the crisis. On the 1st of October the bodyguard having given a banquet to the officers of the regiment of Flanders, the king and the queen, carrying the dauphin in her arms, paid a visit to the guests at dessert and provoked an uproarious and ill-advised demonstration of loyalty: the new national cockade, blue, white and red, was trodden underfoot. At this news, the "patriots" redoubled their attacks and denunciations of the great absolutist conspiracy; with aid of the famine, they set the people of the capital in motion, and, on the 5th of October, a crowd of women, led by one Maillard, an usher by profession, and followed soon after by the National Guard, which La Fayette failed to hold in control, marched to Versailles.

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[11] Son of a well-known economist. He was born in 1749. He was a deputy of the Third Estate of Aix in Provence, although he was a noble.

[12] Born in 1767 of an old noble family of Auvergne. He was deputy of the Nobility of Riom in Auvergne.

As usual, the king could not make up his mind. He hesitated whether to quit Versailles and resist—he could now no longer count on any but his bodyguard, since even the regiment of Flanders had grown cold in his cause[13]—or to abandon himself to events.

The king and the Assembly in Paris

He adopted the latter course. The rioters then compelled him, the queen and the dauphin to take up their abode at the Tuileries and conducted them thither that evening, firmly determined to keep them there (October 6). The Assembly followed a few days later. On the evening of the 5th, in face of a threatening mob and yielding to the pressure of the Assembly, Louis XVI approved the decrees on the *veto* and the Declaration.

D. *Defeat of the king*

As always hitherto on occasions when the king was personally concerned, the Days of the 5th and 6th of October, though they had cost several bodyguards their lives, and though the queen had been seriously threatened, ended in sentimental effusion. Louis protested *his pleasure* and *his confidence* in answer to a harangue from Bailly who awaited him at the city gate; the people, enraptured with their catch of "*the baker, the baker's wife and the little baker's man,*" and in the faith that an era of concord, cordiality and universal abundance was dawning, applauded with a full heart. In reality, the royal pair are henceforward mere prisoners of Paris; *the king has no longer any means to withstand the Assembly.* He is under the domination of La Fayette, chief of the armed force of Paris, while the monarchic party, though it was day by day growing stronger in the Assembly, so clearly realised its defeat that, after one fruitless attempt to raise the provinces, its leading chiefs, Mounier first, in their turn also emigrated.

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[13] It was estimated that about 6,000 women, 15,000 National Guards and about the same number of armed "volunteers" came from Paris to Versailles in the night of the 5th to 6th of October with La Fayette who, ostensibly their officer, had been obliged to follow them.

Monarchy is not yet vanquished

The triumph of the Revolution was now finally assured, but so far there was no reason to believe that it would develop otherwise than within the frame of a constitutional monarchy, such as was ardently desired by the "patriots" themselves. But for this to have been so, the king must have definitely abandoned opposition to the movement which he had been unable to break while it was possible, and determined to collaborate frankly with the Assembly in the new régime. It was his great misfortune that he could never reconcile himself to this course.

IV

The organisation of France

A. *The Constitution of 1791*

The reform of the government of France, accomplished by the Constituent Assembly, is embodied in a constitutional instrument promulgated on the 14th of September, 1791, which had been step by step worked out and drawn up in surroundings, at times, distracting in the extreme. The details of this Constitution will not be dealt with here, but it is advisable to give at least some idea of it as a whole, of its intentions, main lines and spirit.

Its intentions and principles

Its fundamental intention was to make an end of arbitrary power, of privilege, feudalism and despotism; in other words, to demolish the whole political and social edifice of the Ancien Régime. Its principles and its main provisions had for long been laid down in the speculations of the Philosophers from the writings of one of whom, Montesquieu, was derived, in particular, the great idea of *the separation of powers* which dominates the whole of its system. Article 16 of the *Declaration of Rights* had been careful to state that *a society in which the separation of powers is not determined has no constitution.* For this reason *the public powers* which emanate from, and are delegated by, the nation, must henceforth be divided under *three headings: legislative, executive, judiciary.*

The *Legislative power*

The National Assembly

In the Constitution the *National Legislative Assembly* had precedence over the Executive and was the first subject to be dealt with (Heading III, Chapter I). Composed of 745 members, elected for two years and forming a single Chamber, it was to meet on its own initiative annually on the 1st of May; it determined as it saw fit the place where it sat and the duration of its session. Its members were inviolable. None could become ministers, seeing that separation between the executive and legislative powers must be assured. It received exclusive powers[14] *to propose and pass laws, to fix public expenditure, to settle and determine public taxation and to regulate its apportionment, to superintend employment, to regulate everying to do with the coinage, the composition of the army, the administration of the national domains, to enforce the responsibility of ministers and all officials, and it alone can declare war and ratify peace; no treaty that it has not accepted is valid.* Those are indeed the actual powers of *a sovereign;* it is, in fact, through the Assembly that the sovereignty of the nation is exercised.

The *Executive power.* The king

The executive power is in the hands of the king. Hereditary and irresponsible, he is yet the *delegate* of the nation and its first magistrate. His title is *King of the French.*[15] As "*there is in France no authority superior to that of the law, the king reigns only through the law and it is only in the name of the law that he is able to exact obedience.*" He is thus clearly an agent for the execution of the law, and fundamentally no more; moreover, on his accession he must take *an oath of fidelity* to the nation and the law. For the "*splendour of the throne,*" he is provided with a civil list voted annually by the legislative body and with a bodyguard, paid, it may be added, from the said civil list, which must not exceed 1800 men.

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[14] Heading III, Chapter III, Section I.

[15] However the words, *"by the grace of God"* remain attached to this title: *"Louis, by the grace of God and by the constitutional law of the State, King of the French."*

His powers

Every *act* of the king must be countersigned by a minister. He has now six ministers, each with his own definite department, replacing the old ministers and the old Councils. They are chosen by the king, but they are responsible to the Legislative Assembly. The king is regarded as the supreme head of the general administration of the realm, the supreme head of the army, the guardian of the realm against foreign aggression; his likeness is stamped on all coins. The appointment of some high officials and upper officers is in his hands, but "*in conformity with the laws regulating promotion.*" He proposes both war and peace and promulgates laws after he has sanctioned them.

The *suspensive veto*

He can decline to sanction a law and, consequently, suspend its operation for two legislatures; that is to say, for four years, at the end of which the law comes into operation if the Assembly maintains it. This is what is known as the *suspensive veto* of the king. He had desired an *absolute veto* on all laws, which his adherents, too, had claimed on his behalf, but the Constituent Assembly had been too uncertain of his good will or his good faith to accord it. The event will prove them right; yet the *suspensive veto* will, in fact, be used only for ill-judged resistance and prove injurious indeed to the king himself.

The meaning of these dispositions

There can be no doubt that these constitutional dispositions regarding the exercise of the executive power were aimed *at the king*, to diminish his strength, and to deprive him of the means of promoting any absolutist reaction. Louis XVI, brought up in quite other ways and steeped in quite other principles, could not fail to be hurt and humiliated by precautions and restrictions which made his initiative and authority so exiguous, however he might have felt in his secret heart towards the Constitution and the Revolution. If the Constituents thought that, by thus adjusting the respective positions of the executive and legislative powers, they were doing durable work, they were under singular illusions: it may be said of them that without their own knowledge or wish they started the Republic on its road.

The contradiction to the *Declaration*

Distinction between citizens

They were, however, no more favourable to Republic than to Democracy. On this point a moment's consideration of the electoral system which they adopted is convincing. They had guaranteed, in the first heading of the Constitution, as *the first of natural and civil rights, "that all citizens should be admissible to place and employment without other distinction than that of virtue and talent";* yet, between these citizens who were to be "*equal in rights,*" they drew a profound distinction, based solely on *wealth.* They divided them, in fact, into two classes: that of *active citizens* who participated in the elections of deputies and functionaries, and that of *passive citizens* who had no political function but that of lookers-on. To be an active citizen, a man must be twenty-five years old or over, not a servant for wages, and must pay in direct taxation "*an amount equal at least to the value of three days' work.*" In 1791 this division gave about four million three hundred thousand active citizens against about three million passive in a total population of about twenty-six million souls.

Citizens *active* and *passive*

The election of the deputies

Active citizens alone formed the *Primary Assemblies*, which chose the *electors* (one elector for every one hundred active citizens enlisted), while an elector must be a landowner or at least a tenant of some standing; thus putting a fresh premium on easy circumstances if not entirely on wealth. And the Assembly established yet another: a man to be eligible must pay taxation to the amount of a silver mark (slightly over fifty francs), and it was under this system that the elections of 1791 took place. This provision was, however, abolished on the 27th of August, 1791. The Constitution in its final form declares (Heading III, Chapter I, Section III, Article 3) that *active citizens, whatever their condition, profession or assessment may be, are eligible for election as representatives of the nation.*

The *bourgeois* spirit of these dispositions

In spite of this recantation, the elections by two stages, the favour shown to money, and, above all, the exclusion of the unpropertied classes from the exercise of political rights were so arranged as to place control of national representation in the hands of the bourgeoisie. That class similarly secured the support of public force by deciding that active citizens alone could enter the National Guard. It was true, indeed, that the people, properly so called, were not yet by any means capable of playing with real insight any part in political life and that they were in general unconscious of any need to do so, but it was not only from prudential reasons that the bourgeois had excluded them from participation, but from fear of the influence they might gain, one hostile to their own class interest and much dreaded.

The reform of the administration

The reorganisation of the third power, the judiciary, is a particular instance of the vast administrative reconstruction undertaken by the Constituent Assembly. The principles which inspired it were in flat opposition, point by point, to the usages of the Ancien Régime. It was desired that the diversity and confusion of the provincial administration, where precedents, local *liberties*, survivals of the past caused inextricable complications, should be replaced by a uniform organisation set in a simple frame; this same organisation obtaining in all divisions of the national territory. A beginning was made by making a clean sweep of all of the existing arrangements in this administrative domain and by rebuilding the structure from the foundation upwards.

The departments

The first idea was to make a wholly geometrical division of the kingdom into eighty equal squares; this was given up when it was realised that an operation so mechanical would in too many cases do violence to nature by dismembering what she had made one, and to the interests of men by forcing them into a wholly artificial framework. It was therefore decided that there should be eighty-three departments, each taking its name from some natural idiosyncrasy, and that limits should be determined by taking into account as far as possible the different factors imposed by the common interest. The Constituent Assembly undoubtedly desired, by breaking up the ancient provinces, to do away with the particularism which could not but be dangerous at times in a country where a true sense of nationality was still of such recent date; but in this decentralisation of administration it was desired even more that each *provincial unit* should be small enough in extent to make possible and practical the smooth working of its individual institutions at a time when our present facilities for intercommunication were unknown.

Districts, cantons and communes

Each department was divided into *districts*—those now known as *arrondissements*—each district was divided into *cantons*, but the canton only represented a framework for certain administrative services, as, for instance, justice (there is one judge of the peace for each canton); this was not an administrative subdivision properly so called; it had not its own individual administration. On the other hand, below the canton stood the *commune*, a real and fundamental organism in the national life. All the administrators of the commune, of the district, and of the department are *elected* by the active citizens of their area.

Departmental administration

In principle, at each stage there were two elected bodies—one solely deliberative, the *Council*, the other essentially executive, the *Directoire* (Directory); by their side a functionary, also elected, the *Procureur Syndic*[16] assures continuity in policy and uniformity in administration. No agent yet directly represented the central power at the side of local bodies and agencies, though they are theoretically subordinate to it. It was not long before experience showed that in its desire to correct the excessive centralisation which, under the Ancien Régime, had so strangely coincided with extreme diversity in administrative detail, the Constituent Assembly had gone too far in the other direction; departments, districts and communes enjoyed a freedom of initiative and of action almost equivalent to pure autonomy.

The *judiciary power*

The Assembly, in reorganising the *judiciary power* in the new departmental frames, desired that it should, like the legislative and executive powers, emanate from the nation. For this reason, after suppressing all Parliaments and tribunals and cancelling the appointments of all judges, it decided that the magistrates of every degree should be elected by the active citizens. In each canton a *juge de paix* (justice of the peace) was to be appointed to deal with current civil causes and offences; in each district a *tribunal* (court) which should have cognisance of civil causes of some importance; in each department a *tribunal criminel* (criminal court) assisted by a double jury, one to decide whether there was a valid case against the accused or the contrary (*jury of accusation*), the other to decide whether he was guilty or not (*jury of judgment*); in the centre a *Cour de Cassation* (Court of Cancellation) was to watch over the strict application of the law, and cancel mistaken decisions[17] for *errors of form*. The judiciary staff was to be chosen from lawyers; former magistrates, advo-

The *jury of accusation* and the *jury of judgment* cates and others. This staff in the event proved excellent and the substitution, to the justice of the Ancien Régime, of this simple and well thought out organisation was an inestimable benefit.

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[16] He is known as *Procureur de la commune* in the first stage, *Procureur syndic* in the district, *Procureur général syndic* in the department. In the communes at the head of the Council of *municipal officers* stands the *Maire* (mayor) directly elected by the active citizens.

[17] There was no special court of appeal; an appeal was simply carried before another court of the same order as that which had just pronounced a decision.

B. *The Church*

Why the Constituent Assembly does not make the Separation

In old France there was actually yet another power: that represented by the Church, the religious aspect of the State. Throne and altar exchanged mutual support and the one could hardly conceive existence without the other. It would seem logical that the Constituent Assembly, having proclaimed in the *Declaration of Rights* (Art. 10) that religious opinion was free, should separate State and Church. It did not do so, because its members were good pupils of the Philosophers, for whom the Church had no meaning but as an auxiliary of the State and as one of the public offices of the State. One of those men whose influence did most to shape the political mind of the time, the Abbé Raynal, stated as principles the following declarations: "*The State is not made for religion, religion is made for the State. The common interest is the balance in which must be weighed all which is to subsist in the State. The people or the sovereign authority to which it delegates its own is alone entitled to judge whether any institution conforms to the common interest. The State is supreme in all things. Any distinction between temporal power and spiritual power is a palpable absurdity and there cannot be more than a sole and single jurisdiction throughout in matters where public utility has to be provided for or defended*" (*Histoire philosophique . . . des deux Indes*, 1770).

Persistence of the idea of a State Church

This point must not be forgotten if we are to understand the dealings of the Constituent Assembly with religion and forms of worship. It has been justly remarked that, in the *Declaration of Rights*, only the word *tolerance* was used, not *liberty* or *equality of worship*. There is a steady determination to preserve a State Church, and this is naturally to be the Catholic Church; but equally a determination to regulate it, in the name of the nation, by such conditions as they think fit to impose. There was, moreover, a strong conviction that so long as doctrine properly so called was not tampered with, faith should not be offended.

Measures taken by the Assembly

In the name of liberty, they suppressed all perpetual monastic vows and all religious orders; the members of these were to have pensions for life. The duties undertaken by the Church which were a justification for its wealth—namely, education and public relief—were to pass to the State and all ecclesiastical property was consequently to be placed at *the disposal of the nation.* Stipends paid by the State would replace the former clerical revenues. The ecclesiastical organisation was conformed to that adopted for the administration of the State, by deciding that there should be no more than one archbishop or bishop for each department, that the rural parishes should correspond to the communes, and that in the towns, parishes of less than a certain fixed size should be amalgamated. At a blow fifty-two bishoprics were suppressed and many parishes as well. Bishops and parish priests, while they *must be selected from the clergy*, were to be *elected* like ordinary officials. They were to have fixed salaries and take *oaths* of fidelity to the nation, the law and the king. The bishops should write to the pope that they were within his communion, but they would no longer receive canonical investiture from his hands; it was to be conferred by the archbishops. The Church of France would thus become truly national.

The *Civil Constitution of the Clergy*

Its consequences

The organic law which in this manner regulated the civil and temporal life of the Church in France was known as the *Civil Constitution of the Clergy* (July, 1790). It did not pass the Assembly without resistance; resistance outside was even stronger, and the cause of serious difficulties to the Revolution. Excellent priests, strong devotees of the new political system, but believing the Assembly to have exceeded its rights by its authoritative modifications of ecclesiastical areas and by its regulations for the appointment of bishops and parish priests, were, by the obligation to take the oath, subjected to a distressing dilemma of conscience. Others, ill-disposed towards the Revolution, seized with glee an opportunity to oppose it on grounds higher than those of party politics or private interest. Above all, the pope, recognised as the head of the Church in the spiritual field, and her supreme authority, in default of the council declined by the Constituent Assembly, when the episcopate laid the case before him, would not consent that decisions so important should be taken without being referred to him. In vain, after ripe reflection, did the most enlightened prelates in France recommend him, in the interests of the Church herself, to accept the position and authenticate the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, *to christen it*, as was written in pleasantry by a contemporary. He lent a kinder ear to the *émigrés* and to Cardinal de Bernis, who was the French ambassador at Rome, and who represented it to him as a danger to religion and an outrage upon his own pontifical authority; while his fear lest his territory in France—Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin should slip [18] from his grasp made him still more unfavourable. Finally, he condemned the Civil Constitution as an attack on the faith—which was false—and as one on Church discipline—which was true (March 10, 1791). Moreover, proceeding from the particular effect to the general cause, he stigmatised revolutionary principles as impious. He practically interdicted the taking by priests of the constitutional oath. Some, about one-half of the whole number,[19] broke bounds and took it; they were known as the *jurors;* the others who refused it were called the *refractory*. Many emigrated; of those who remained, large numbers joined with the most inflexible anti-revolutionists.

Attitude of the pope

The *jurors* and the *refractory priests*

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[18] The inhabitants had expelled his legate and Avignon had demanded reunion with France.

[19] This refers only to the parish priests and vicars. All the bishops, with the exception of seven, refused to take the oath.

Disappointment of the Assembly

The Assembly, believing itself to be well within its rights, had in no way foreseen this result; for the king had at first entered no protest against the decrees, nor had the bishops, even the nuncio, taken up any irreconcilable attitude towards them; it was none the less true that its *National Church,* quite against the Assembly's wish, found itself to be in schism and that the realm had been plunged into a religious war: two hostile clergies, two opposing armies of the faithful, stood face to face. The Assembly, by supporting *its own* clergy, and by proposing to outlaw the other, merely raised passions in both camps to the pitch of exasperation. For this reason, the adoption of the *Civil Constitution of the Clergy* has generally been thought a serious mistake.

C. *The finances*

This reconstruction of government and institutions, though total, did not automatically solve the formidable problem which had caused the convocation of the States-General: it put nothing in the coffers of the State. The Assembly abolished all *imposts* of the old monarchy and replaced them by *contributions*, as a word more appropriate to a system based on liberty. Of these there were three: *one* upon landed property; *another* on movable property; *a third* on profits from trade and industry.[20] But to set the new system at work needed time and a modicum of experience. Meanwhile, the public debt, still unpaid, was increasing, for the liquidation of the Ancien Régime had been costly. It was necessary, for instance, to refund the prices paid by the holders of purchased judicial and financial posts now suppressed. It was necessary to reimburse accountable officials for the securities which they had deposited, and it was necessary to pay the pensions granted to the monks and the stipends of the clergy. The old debt, about 3 milliards, 119 million livres in the currency of the time, thus now amounted to more than 4 milliards, 262 millions. Necker,

The contributions

The national debt

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[20] The indirect taxes upon food-stuffs, extremely unpopular, were not replaced.

who continued to direct the finances almost to the end of the year 1790, failed to rise to the occasion and suggested only some ineffective expedients. Bankruptcy seemed inevitable. The Assembly sought for a solution of the formidable problem in the "*taking over by the Nation*" of the landed property of the clergy (November 2, 1789).

The taking over of Church property

This idea had indeed been long in the air. Calonne, when in straits, had accepted the principle under Louis XV; it had even been partially applied to the property of the nine suppressed religious orders. It was revived by Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun (October 10, 1789). The thesis maintained by him was that the Church, in receiving its property, did so on behalf of the whole body of the faithful; that is, on behalf of the nation itself, and that the State would in fact do all that could justly be demanded if it took upon itself the discharge of commitments under bequests for specified purposes and the other obligations of the clergy towards public relief, public education and general Church expenses. A few jurists upheld him, and, though several clergy of eminence opposed him, for instance, the Abbé Maury and Boisgelin, the Archbishop of Aix, the Assembly found in his favour by 508 votes to 346.

The *assignats*

It was then agreed that the properties thus resumed should be sold in lots and that meanwhile the proceeds of the sales should be *funded;* that is to say, represented by *warrants* bearing interest and placed in circulation like ordinary securities. They were called *assignats*, because some land still belonging to the State had been assigned as security; the *assignat* is thus a kind of *mortgage bond*, or, if it be preferred, a *liability* secured upon State property. But sales proved difficult and slow, the assignats soon became virtually bank-notes, and the Assembly gave them compulsory currency, in all transactions, on the same level as ordinary coin (April 17, 1790). Unfortunately, the authority of the law was insufficient to sustain them at their

Their transformation

Their depreciation

nominal value and their market value followed the variations of men's confidence in the success and permanence of the Revolution. Still further, financial stringencies soon started a multiplication of assignats; Church property was valued at 3 milliards; at the end of April, 1792, more than 2 milliards of assignats were in circulation; they had fallen from twenty-five to thirty-five per cent below face value in France and from fifty to sixty per cent abroad. Yet the sale of the *biens nationaux* (national property) was more rapid than was anticipated and the prices fetched often exceeded the estimate; but it so happened that various *economic* causes (heavy buying abroad) and *political* causes (various speculations and manoeuvres of the aristocrats) sadly counterbalanced this advantage, so much so that the financial problem remained unsolved, while another was added, in the shape of the *high cost of living*, which caused much distress.

V

The crisis of 1791

A. *The king's state of mind*

While the Constituent Assembly worked, in long and laborious sittings, at the vast task of remaking all France, Louis XVI had never ceased to protest his good intentions and outwardly to behave as though he had frankly accepted the changes accomplished; but he stood arraigned at the court of his own conscience, and desired supremely to shake off the fetters in which necessity had bound him. Leaving no stone unturned, he embarked upon secret intrigues of which the deputies had no more than a dim suspicion. He believed himself indeed quite within his rights. The monarchic tradition, of which he was the depositary, represented the Assembly's encroachments on his authority as so many acts of sacrilege. The passing of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which at first had not disturbed him, had later reinforced his political ill-will with grave conscientious misgivings, when a letter came from the pope to reproach him with defaulting, by having confirmed it, in his duties as a king and a Christian.

His transactions with La Fayette

After the 14th of July, 1789, La Fayette had attained, step by step, a high personal influence. On the Days of the 5th and 6th of October, though at first carried off his feet by the Parisian insurrection, he had figured in the end as the saviour of the royal family. A liberal, but still much attached to the monarchy, he had eagerly embraced the rôle of the king's adviser, guide and guardian. He had, nevertheless, some illusions as to the solidity and extent of his own power. These were shared by Louis XVI and his entourage, who endeavoured to make him a tool for the arrest of the revolutionary movement; and he lent himself to an understanding which more than bordered on discreditable intrigue. When, in the last months of 1790, the king realised that his ally was now in no position to keep his promises, he turned to another quarter.

Negotiations with foreign kings

He began, in the first place, with d'Agout and the Baron of Breteuil, as intermediaries, a series of negotiations with foreign sovereigns with the object of inducing them to intervene, if needful by arms, in support of the royal authority now disregarded by the Assembly. He dreamt of a kind of Holy League of Kings against the Revolution, yet he was well aware that the great powers would do nothing for nothing, and that, if they consented to act, they would exact "compensations" whose cost would fall upon France.

The collusion with Mirabeau

Secondly, he accepted, not without qualms, the services of Mirabeau, who made offers in July, 1790. This man, able but overwhelmed with debt and devoid of all moral sense, was sincerely monarchist. He thought the Revolution was going too far and needed checking. The difficulty was to find how this could be done. It occurred to Mirabeau to exploit the dissensions, growing more and more marked, among the revolutionaries, on the very question of the extent to which the Revolution should be carried, and the personal rivalries among them which he did his utmost to envenom.[21] He considered, too, the removal of the king to the provinces, for instance to Rouen, and the organisation about him there of an armed force strong enough to checkmate the Assembly and Paris; he did his utmost, in the debates of the legislature, to safeguard the king's authority. He succeeded only in becoming himself suspect and abused as a traitor by the "patriots," without on the other hand winning the confidence of the court who despised him while they paid him. But his health was seriously impaired and he died on the 2d of April, 1791.

B. *The means of defence of the Revolution*

Every day that went by made the Revolution stronger and organised more efficiently its means of action. The democratic press struck vigorous roots; advanced opinions were expressed with growing audacity; a man of letters, named Lavicomterie, issued the first republican manifesto under the title of *Du Peuple et des Rois* (People and Kings, end of 1790).

The clubs

Since the start of the Revolution several clubs had been founded, frequented by deputies, journalists, theorists: the

The Jacobins

best known, which met at the *Convent of the Jacobins*, in the Rue Saint-Honoré, and called itself the *Society of Friends of the Constitution*, already commanded much influence, on its own account, in Paris and, through its *affiliated societies*, which were increasing in number, in the provinces. It had no hostility to the monarchy and energetically opposed all demagogues, but was in no way disposed to look on while the counter-revolutionaries worked. Moreover, in the current month of July, 1790, the *Society of Friends of the Rights of Man and Citizen* was founded, called more familiarly the *Club of the Cordeliers*,

The Cordeliers

because it met in the convent of the *Cordeliers* (Franciscans) and because it was inaugurated by members of the former district of the Cordeliers.[22] This club had taken upon itself the task of keeping *l'œil de la surveillance*[23] (a sentinel eye) on the men and the actions of all authorities in the realm. They had no great admiration for the Constitution, upheld by the Jacobins; their trend was towards a frankly democratic or even republican government. Their main influence was on the petty bourgeois and the populace. The club was, at first, one of one ward but was soon extended; during the winter of 1790-1791 other popular ward societies were established in Paris, called *Fraternal Societies.* In May, 1791, these societies federated with the Cordeliers, forming an active and solid centre for democratic propaganda and activity, in which the court was looked on with extreme suspicion and in which any politicians who showed inclinations to serve it were promptly hunted out. There was now no possibility of surprise from the side of reaction.

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[21] For instance, the brothers Lameth opposed La Fayette; a party of the Left was gathering around Robespierre. The latter, born in 1758, was advocate and deputy of the Third Estate of Arras. Mirabeau said of him: *"He should go far, he believes everything he says."* His influence was not long in being established in the Assembly and among the Jacobins.

Fraternal Societies

C. *The flight of the king*

All things being considered, Louis XVI thought his best course would be to withdraw to a place to which the authority of the Assembly and the control of Paris did not extend. He would go to Nancy, where his devoted servant, the Marquis of Bouillé, was in command; there he would concentrate his troops and wait for help from the emperor, acting afterwards as opportunity might allow. His first attempt at escape failed (April 18, 1791); a second, more carefully prepared, nearly succeeded (June 20). To his misfortune, his carriage needed repair on the way. It arrived very late at the first stages arranged; the horsemen, sent to meet him by Bouillé, tired of waiting, had gone away, and a postmaster, named Drouet, recognised the king, in spite of his disguise, at Sainte-Menehould. He hastened to Varennes,[24] and warned the

He is stopped at Varennes

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[22] Paris was at first divided into sixty *districts;* on the 21st of May, 1790, the Assembly abolished them and replaced them by forty-eight *sections.*

[23] Their official papers carried as an emblem an open eye.

[24] Sainte-Mĕnehould, chief town of arrondissement in the department of the Marne, on the Aisne; Varennes, chief town of canton in the department of the Meuse, on the Aire.

municipality, by whom the travellers were detained; they were then conducted back to Paris under the protection and supervision of some commissioners of the Assembly, and of an imposing armed force, amid such a silence of the people "*as is a lesson to kings*."

The anti-royalist agitation

Louis XVI had been so indiscreet as to leave behind him on his departure a manifesto reprobating the Revolution, and at the same time revealing his own duplicity. His flight, seen by the Assembly as the prelude to a foreign invasion, opened the eyes of the "patriots" to his treason. The club of the Cordeliers immediately presented a petition to the Constituent Assembly in which were these words: "*We conjure you to declare on the spot that France is no longer a monarchy, that she is a republic; or at least to wait until all the departments, all the Primary Assemblies shall have expressed their views on this important question before thinking of binding, for a second time, the fairest empire in the world with the chains and fetters of monarchism.*" Petitions to a similar effect quickly poured in from numerous municipalities of the departments. Unfortunately, the deputies were alarmed at the idea of a republic, a form of government which they believed, on evidence from antiquity and the Middle Ages, to be incompatible with the existence of a great nation. They had remarked that the republic established in England after the Revolution of 1648 had resulted in a military tyranny, and the current difficulties of the young American republic in finding its feet added further to their anxiety. Robespierre, for instance, thought that a republic in France would involve war with monarchic Europe, with loss of liberty in case of defeat, and with domination by the army (stratocracy) in the event of victory. He no less feared an outbreak of civil war, nothing having yet prepared the mass of the people for a republican government. For these reasons, regretfully and for lack of a better solution, the Assembly decided to acquit the king and to blame his evil advisers,

Sentiments of the Assembly

especially Bouillé, for the deviation which they called his *abduction*. They believed, moreover, that his reinstatement on the throne would cut short the nefarious scheming of foreign monarchs, while to their bourgeois majority his personal presence remained a safeguard against the political, and still more, the *social* pretensions of the people.

The suspension of the king

The affair of the Champ de Mars

Bourgeois and monarchist reaction

It was thus decided, on the 24th of June, that the king should be *provisionally suspended*, pending a final decision on his destiny, and, in spite of the democratic and anti-monarchic agitation in which the Jacobin club itself finally joined, the Assembly voted, on the 16th of July, another decree providing that the suspension should continue until the Constitution was complete, but at that moment should cease. The Jacobins inclined to it, but the Cordeliers persisted in their agitation. They made, on the Champ de Mars, a demonstration in support of a republican petition. A murderous fusillade, discharged by the National Guards of La Fayette, on the order of Bailly, Mayor of Paris, and with the approbation of the Assembly, afraid of popular pressure, put an end to this enterprise (17th of July). The leaders of the Cordeliers and the Popular Societies were arrested or took to hiding. Their newspapers were suppressed. By the 16th of July, the more conservative Jacobins had made a separate combination and had founded the Club of the Feuillants (its headquarters being the Convent of the Feuillants), round La Fayette and the brothers Lameth. Its object was to maintain and consolidate the political and social system sanctioned by the monarchic and bourgeois Constitution of 1791. The last touches given to the Constitution by the Assembly are clearly in this spirit and intention. Louis XVI knew that unless he reconciled himself to the Constitution he would be deemed to have abdicated; he had given up, too, all hopes of any immediate succour from foreign princes. Even the Emperor Leopold II, his brother-in-law, had deserted him. He therefore made known to the Assembly that he accepted the new régime and promised to defend it both in France and against the foreigner (September 13). The next day he attended in person at the Assembly and once more took "the oath of fidelity to the Nation and the Law."

Conclusion

The Constituent Assembly ended in a recrudescence of royalism and in the self-induced illusion that King and Nation were at last in accord and that political and social stability was now firmly established (September 30). But thenceforward there was in existence a *democratic party* of great strength which quickly gained fresh life in the Fraternal Societies. It never forgave the beneficiaries of the Constitution for the fusillade of the Champ de Mars; the republican idea, initiated in intellectual circles, made progress among democrats. Above all the king had killed all confidence in his good faith among the people, and his suspension had necessitated a new departure which proved highly detrimental to his cause: for three months the Assembly had been in control of the executive power, exercised through the ministers, and it had been evident that the monarch was less indispensable than had been believed. Something like a rehearsal of a republic had been carried out. It is true that a sincere, upright, resolute and able man might even then have been able, at least for a time, to hold the Revolution to the bounds which the Constitution had desired to assign to it. But Louis XVI had superabundantly shown himself no such man; and for this reason the events which had continually swept men forward since the 5th of May, 1789, must now implacably resume their due logical course.

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CHAPTER XXVIII

THE REVOLUTION: THE FALL OF ROYALTY

I

The Assembly and the king

THE Assembly which met on the 1st of October was intended, in principle, to assure the working of the Constitution; it had no power to modify it. Legally it should have lasted until the 1st of October, 1793, the electoral term being two years. On the 20th of September, 1792, however, it gave place to a revising assembly which was called the *Convention:* it proved necessary, in fact, that the Constitution, put out of gear by the collapse of royalty, should either be mended or remodelled.

A. *Composition and spirit of the Legislative Assembly*

The *Legislative Assembly* was composed of new men; the Constituents, inspired by a personal disinterestedness which found few imitators, had decided that none of themselves should be eligible to the new Assembly. *This was in no sense republican;* only three men in it, Bazire, Chabot and Merlin de Thionville, represented the extreme views of the Cordeliers. The majority—about 600 members out of 745—were unreservedly for the Constitution. It is remarkable that 264 deputies enrolled themselves in the monarchist and conservative club of the Feuillants, while only 136 adhered to that of the Jacobins, but those who kept their independence—about 345 of the whole number —while they feared the "factions" of the Left, no less dreaded the reactionary spirit of the Right and entertained from the start a profound distrust of both court and king.

The Feuillants; their disunion

The Feuillants, on their side, were far from unanimous. Some, disciples of Barnave and Charles and Alexandre de Lameth, were definitively won over to the personal policy of Louis XVI; the others took their stand on the suggestions of La Fayette, who, strongly in favour of strengthening the power of the king, declined to sacrifice the Constitution to his cause and desired above all things a leading part for himself in the kingdom. The queen detested him, and Louis XVI had a dread of falling under his domination. He was soon to be appointed to the command of an army on the northern frontier and thus find himself sundered from Paris, whose tides of opinion he was to interpret with steadily increasing inaccuracy.

The Jacobins; their tendencies

The Jacobins, on the contrary, among whom the influence of *Robespierre*, a firm democrat, was extending, were far more united and in much better case than the Feuillants to pursue a stable policy; attached to the Revolution by their origin and their interests, belonging for the most part to the petty or middle bourgeoisie, the main purchasers of the *biens nationaux* (nationalized property) and delivered by the new régime from stagnation if not from political annihilation, they were determined to defend it with the support, if needful, of the populace, the passive citizens to whom they thus gradually revealed their own unsuspected power.

B. *The king, the queen and the court*

The king, for his part, resumed his policy of intrigue at home and surreptitious negotiations abroad. He, the queen and their immediate advisers cherished illusions which are strange in our sight, but understandable when we realise the atmosphere into which they were born. Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette had been obliged to repel on the part of their subjects proffers of service and plans for collusion from this quarter far more than to solicit them: La Fayette, Mirabeau, the *Triumvirate* just named (the two Lameths and Barnave), Duport and soon Dumouriez, and even the best known among the leaders in the Legislative Assembly, give or will give an impression that they are to be bought over, or, at least, that they are willing, for the sake of their personal ambition, or, in the interest of their faction, to participate in plots, highly inconsistent with the political probity and fidelity to principle of which they make such parade.

The mistake of Louis and Marie-Antoinette

For this reason, the royal pair have ceased to believe that their adversaries keep any convictions uncontaminated with self-interest, and both rely far too exclusively on bribery or promises never meant to be kept. They are persuaded, too, that France cannot possibly hold her own against foreign armies, that they themselves need only gain time and await the hour of salvation. This political miscalculation of the two unfortunates has its origin in defective information, and in a too short-sighted view of human nature.

The king's means of action

1. Armed force

2. The ministers

3. Money and the press

The king, moreover, was far from being so reduced to impotence that he must necessarily recognise that he was completely in the hands of his subjects. Apart from his "constitutional" guard of 1800 men, which he had quietly increased to 6000, he could reckon on the loyalty of a large number of gentlemen, all of tried courage, many with some military experience. In Paris alone there were about 12,000 *Knights of St. Louis,*[1] almost all former officers and ready to face death in his service. Further, he could still choose his own ministers, and the Constitution having provided (Heading IV, Art. 2) that deputies could not be "*promoted to the ministry,*" it was in his power to choose, if he wished, opponents to the Revolution, nor did he fail to do so. His ministers for Foreign Affairs, such as Montmorin and Delessart, through their diplomatic agents, egged on foreign governments against the new France. His ministers of War and of the Navy worked efficiently at the task of disorganising the national defence, and lulled to sleep the vigilance of the Assembly by false reports. He had money enough to turn the freedom of the press to his own profit. He subsidised the most bold and most violent anti-revolutionary papers, such as *Le Journal général de la cour et de la ville, Les Actes des Apôtres* and *l'Ami du roi,* in the expectation that they would seriously influence public opinion. He relied, too, on political agitation by those priests who had refused the constitutional oath, and would profit by the abolition of the political system of 1791. At that time, the people of France were Catholic; they were to all semblance much attached to their religion, and it was far from improbable that, once convinced that it was threatened or aggrieved, they would decline to exchange it for institutions the value of which they had not yet had time to appreciate. Finally, Louis XVI always entertained high hopes of armed intervention by foreign princes, aided by the emigrants who were mustering their forces on the territory of the Elector of Treves. He saw with pleasure, among the neighbours of France, a growing animosity against the ideas and the men of the Revolution, and did his best to exasperate it by secret incitements and promises.

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[1] The royal and military *Order of St. Louis* had been established on the 5th of April, 1693, by Louis XIV. It rewarded his officers by land and by sea.

4. The clergy and religion

5. The foreign princes

Of course none of these advantages, apart from the others and by itself, could be considered decisive, but cumulatively they might legitimately lead the king to believe that he was still strong enough to stand up to the Assembly and that he had not yet lost the game whose prize was his crown.

C. *The groups in the Assembly*

Nor did he find among the deputies such firm decision, such unanimity in thought, or such uniformity in opinion as must have discouraged him from the outset. Men of that time had not yet developed our modern parliamentary methods; they did not as yet form organised parties, each with a programme of its own and exercising discipline over its members, and they were far more individualistic than our deputies of today. They did, however, fall into groups according to their affinities and general tendencies.

1. The *Right*

Thus, there was in the Assembly a *Right* as we now call it. It was at first composed of about 160 members, and later, in the first months of 1792, of about 250. They were *monarchiens* (monarchists); that is to say, partisans of royalty, but, under that general name, diverse opinions and sentiments were included: on one wing were those whose first concern was for the king, on the other those whose first concern was with the Constitution and between them a number with every intermediate shade of opinion. The Left was composed of 136 Jacobins or Cordeliers, more democratic than the authors of the Constitution, and who would not in any circumstances allow the king to be strong. They had never forgiven Louis XVI for the ill faith brought home to him by his flight in June, 1791, and they were more ready than they themselves realised to sacrifice him—and royalty with him—to the triumph of the Revolution.

2. The *Left*

The Girondins

The most brilliant speakers in this division of the Assembly were three deputies from the department of Gironde—Vergniaud, Guadet, and Gensonné. It is now usual to designate the whole party by the name of the *Gironde* and its members, without distinction, as the *Girondins*.[2] Their contemporaries attached more importance to the influence of Condorcet and still more so to that of Brissot, a deputy of Paris; and they thus commonly gave to those on the Left wing of the Legislative Assembly the name of *Brissotins*.

While their adversaries were supported by the club of the Feuillants, they themselves drew their strength from the growing influence of the clubs of the Jacobins and the Cordeliers, who indeed soon became dominant. One of their friends, Pétion, became, in November, Mayor of Paris.

3. The *Centre*

Between the Right and the Left wings the Centre, on which the majority depended, appears closer to the Feuillants than to the Jacobins. In reality it drifts and hesitates; its course will be fixed and decided by that of events.

D. *The people of Paris*

The real strength lay with the people of Paris, whose opinion was formed and action determined by the *Fraternal Societies* and the democratic newspapers, such as *Les Révolutions de Paris*, *Le Journal de Paris*, and *L'Ami du Peuple* of Marat.[3] Only agreement and collaboration of the king with the Assembly—that is to say, his sincere acceptance of the accomplished fact—could save him from a fatal catastrophe. He took a contrary course, plunged into conflict with the legislators, and convinced the leaders of the people that he was again playing traitor to the nation.

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[2] This designation owed its late and lasting success mainly to the publication of the celebrated *Histoire des Girondins* by Lamartine in 1847.

II

The Conflict

The attachment of the Assembly to the Constitution

On the 4th of October the whole Assembly, including various Republicans, such as Brissot and Condorcet, had taken oath upon the text of the Constitution borne in state from the Archives; a ceremony much ridiculed by the democratic papers as an act of idolatry, but which at least testified to the desire of the deputies to shape their course in accordance with the last will and testament of the Constituent Assembly, the majority either through conviction or through fear of entering uncharted country off the beaten track, others by necessity, in the belief they still entertained, that France could not do without a king. *All, it may be, was not yet lost for Louis XVI.*

A. *The causes of the conflict between the king and the Assembly*

The conflict whose end was his dethronement arose upon *two questions:* that of the *refractory priests*, and that of the *emigrants.* In the West of the kingdom, in Normandy and in Vendée, the priests who had refused the constitutional oath stirred up the people against those who had taken it; they provoked disturbances which became more and more frequent, and finally serious. On the 29th of October, the Assembly decided that these priests should be called on to take the legal oath; in case of refusal they were to be punished by the loss of their stipends and by two years' imprisonment. The king protested against this decree. The emigrants were active in

The decrees of the 29th of October and the 9th of November agitation on the Eastern frontier. They made, indeed, more noise than progress, but this was not fully realised by French public opinion. On the 9th of November, the Assembly passed a decree which gave them two months in which to return; after which they were to be subject to the penalty of death and confiscation of property. The king did not sanction the decree, contenting himself with writing to his brother, the Count of Provence, who did not obey, to command him to return to Paris. For some time he had been issuing similar orders, all equally ineffective, to the emigrant officers.

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[3] Born in 1743, a physician and a scholar, he had an extremely inquiring mind. At the beginning of the Revolution he plunged into journalism. An active member of the club of the Cordeliers, he founded *L'Ami du Peuple* (September, 1789), a paper of violently democratic opinions.

The *veto* of the king

When, on the 19th of November, he definitely refused to sanction the decree relating to refractory priests, the crisis became acute. Strictly speaking, he was within his right; under the Constitution he could exercise his suspensive *veto*, but the use of it in this way was nevertheless highly imprudent. Public opinion was alarmed, fresh attacks were made on the very principle of the *veto* by the democratic press and by the Fraternal Societies. The "patriots" became more and more firmly convinced that the king was a secret friend to every enemy of the Revolution and that he was conspiring with foreign sovereigns against it.

B. *The question of war.*

The king and the Brissotins

This was quite true. At that very moment (December, 1791) the royal pair were working for a coalition [4] against France, and hoped for the best in the shape of "*a small war*" which, in the then unprepared state of the country, must inevitably end in its quick defeat. This would unquestionably throw the nation into the arms of the king, and the revolutionary nightmare would be finally dispelled. The kings, however, did not seem particularly eager for the war; some, like the King of Prussia, would undertake it only under conditions which Louis XVI found onerous; but the *Brissotins* egged on the Assembly to war by their violent arraignments of the kings and the emigrants while the court was delighted with the initiative thus shown.

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[4] The letter of Louis XVI to the King of Prussia dated 3d of December, 1791, contains the following sentence: "*I have just addressed the Emperor, the Empress of Russia, the Kings of Spain and Sweden and have suggested to them the idea of a Congress of the principal powers of Europe, supported by an armed force, as the best way to arrest the factious in this country, to provide the means of re-establishing a more desirable order of things and to prevent the evils under which we labour from spreading to the other States of Europe.*"

The attitude of Robespierre

It was vigorously opposed at the Jacobin club, where it was first brought forward and discussed, by Robespierre, who had small confidence in Brissot and his friends. Nor was their extravagance in declamation much to his taste. He regarded them as still in the bonds of aristocracy, its habitudes and its interests; he suspected them, and justly, of undesirable relations with big business and high finance—what is now known as the *business world.* Finally he did not believe them above adapting their principles to the occasion, of entering into negotiations with La Fayette, or even with the court. In another direction, his shrewd objections to war were in no way removed, but the reverse, now that he suspected the king of desiring it. He explained, therefore, that to agree to it at that moment would mean entrusting its conduct to the court, and the court would play traitor; it should therefore, if unavoidable, be postponed till a time when, domestic enemies having been dealt with, the executive power could no longer be a cause for anxiety. He proposed that the Assembly should annul the *veto* placed by the king on the decrees of the 9th and 19th of November and should declare the *veto* henceforward applicable only to ordinary laws and not to measures of emergency.

Brissot beats him

Brissot beat him, after three months' bitter debate, by playing the dangerous game of continually overbidding him for democratic support; he attracted the popular elements of the Jacobins by his patriotic enthusiasm, and curried favour with the passive citizens by a demand that arms should be given them and pikes forged for the purpose. On the 17th of January the club issued a belligerent circular to its affiliated societies in the departments. The war "*is inevitable,*" it ran, "*and anything tending to postpone it would be fatal to us.*"

Differences of opinion in those about the king

About the king, agreement on the question was far from complete: the Triumvirate, Barnave and the Lameths, advised against war; *Delessart,* Minister for Foreign Affairs, was endeavouring to avoid it by coming to terms with the Emperor Leopold and by persuading the Elector of Treves to expel the emigrants from the town of Coblenz; *Narbonne,* Minister of War, on the contrary, desired and promoted it, hoping, in his ambition, to wield a decisive influence under the restored monarchy which was inevitably bound to result. He joined hands with La Fayette, was continually in and out of Condorcet's house, lent countenance to the Brissotins, and proclaimed the necessary military preparations to be complete. His mendacious asseverations did much to induce the majority of the Assembly to incline to a belligerent attitude.

The economic situation and the state of opinion

The economic situation of France in the first months of 1792 was far from satisfactory. After the poor harvest of 1791 the food problem recurred afresh, the cost of living rose; dearth resulted in rioting almost everywhere, particularly in the South. In the Centre the war on the châteaux recurred. In many departments, incessant difficulties caused clashes between *Feuillant* directories and *Jacobin* municipalities. In the Mediterranean region, anti-revolutionaries of all kinds took all possible advantage of political, social and religious animosities to foment disorder. The kingdom was thrown into a state of turmoil, disquietude, enervation, which fostered the rising revolutionary exaltation of the people, and gave excellent openings to Girondist incitements.

C. *Towards the war.*

Thus many interests and very diverse hopes conspired to plunge France into the great and dubious adventure of a war, whose ultimate issue was to be quite other than that expected by the court.

Attitude of the Assembly

On the 25th of January, the Assembly had passed a resolution inviting the king to ask the Emperor definitely "*whether he disavowed every treaty and convention directed against the sovereignty, independence and safety of the nation.*" Leopold II was ill pleased with this formal demand and he answered (February 19) with an indictment of the "*pernicious sect*" of the Jacobins whom he regarded as the "*enemies of the Most Christian king and of the fundamental principles of the existing Constitution and as disturbers of public peace and quiet.*" Delessart, with the object of avoiding a rupture, continued negotiations but obviously his hand was a poor one. Louis XVI, out of patience with the effrontery of Narbonne, dismissed him (end of February), but Delessart gained nothing thereby, since the Brissotins, taking part and lot with the "patriot" minister, delivered a violent personal attack upon him.

The attack on Delessart

They accused him of having acted in contravention of the intentions of the Assembly, of having displayed in his dealings with Austria "*a cowardice and weakness unworthy of the greatness of a free people,*" of having laid himself open to the insults of the imperial minister, Kaunitz, of which he could now make no mystery, and which came home to the nation itself over his head. Vergniaud, seizing his chance, in a speech full of violence and menace, brought forward the progressively accumulating suspicions of treason on the part of the queen. "*From this tribune,*" he exclaimed, "*I see the palace where counter-revolution is being hatched, where manoeuvres are being devised which are to deliver us over to Austria. . . . The day has come on which you can end these effronteries and confound those conspirators. Dismay and terror have often gone forth from that palace in times of old and in the name of despotism; let them return to it today in the name of the law; let them strike deep into all hearts that dwell therein and teach them that the Constitution holds the king alone inviolable. The law is ready for the guilty and makes no distinc-*

tion. Nor is the head of any transgressor whatever beyond the sweep of her sword."

Fall of the Feuillant ministry; the Brissotins in power

The Assembly brought Delessart before the High Court;[5] he was arrested, the other Feuillant ministers fell with him (March 10-11) and Louis XVI had to accept the position and appoint a ministry of Brissotins. He consoled himself with the thought that they were, at any rate, as anxious for war as himself.

The new ministers

Roland, a learned economist, bourgeois, simple, honest and rather ingenuous, for the rest a stout democrat, received the portfolio for Home Affairs. He was completely dominated and directed by his wife, considerably younger than himself, pretty, cultivated, and, though ambitious, firmly attached to the Revolution.

Clavière directed the Finances, for which he was excellently qualified. *Dumouriez*, a bold and intelligent adventurer, an old officer, formerly attached to the king's *secret*—that is to say, to the secret personal diplomacy of Louis XV—and now again a soldier, was put in charge of Foreign Affairs. He proved a strong ministerial chief and little is known as to what he precisely wanted for himself. He thought himself able, following the example of Mirabeau, to arrest the Revolution by intrigue, and to constitute a strong government, in which his own authority was, no doubt, to preponderate. He was at bottom, by education, habits and tastes, a man of the Ancien Régime, but, for the time being, he played the Jacobin, donned the red cap, and won the confidence of Madame Roland and so that of the whole Girondin clan. He admired Prussia and detested Austria, and he came on the scene with a scheme for a war of attack, which he upheld with intrepid audacity in face of the vacillation and timidity of his colleagues. The other ministers—*Grave* (War),[6] *Lacoste* (Navy), *Duranthon* (Justice)—were mere makeshifts. The king and the queen had divined the unprincipled schemer behind the magnanimous airs of Dumouriez and played with him as they had with Mirabeau in the past.

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[5] The Constitution (Chap. V, Art. 23) said: "*A National High Court, formed of members of the Court of Cassation and of the grand juries, will take cognisance of any delinquencies of the ministers and principal agents of the executive power, and of misdemeanours which endanger the general safety of the State when the Legislative Body shall have issued a writ of accusation.*"

The declaration of war (April 20)

The death of Leopold II (March 1) and the accession of his youthful and bellicose son, Francis II, precipitated events. The new emperor assumed an irreconcilable attitude on every question at issue. On the 20th of April, Louis XVI proposed to the Assembly a declaration of war on the "*King of Hungary and Bohemia.*" It was passed almost unanimously by the deputies. The queen nevertheless had already secretly communicated to the Austrian cabinet all that had passed at the Council of ministers and kept it fully advised on all plans of Dumouriez.

III

The decisive crisis

A. *The king against the Assembly and against the ministers.* The first failures: their effect on the Assembly

The Brissotins had their desire—power and war—but the victory which would have justified them had still to be won; defeat was to come first. The offensive in the Netherlands arranged by Dumouriez resulted in a rout of the French army. The generals refused to advance again and kept solely on the defensive. At the Jacobin club, Robespierre resumed his attacks on the court, and the Girondins began to think he might be right, that the incapacity or the ill-will of the generals coincided too closely with the wishes of the royal pair to be anything but integral parts of a veritable betrayal. For this reason, while displaying a disposition to come to terms with the Feuillants against those who fostered disorder and demagogism, confounded by them only too readily with the democrats, they resolved to make the king once more capitulate. Moreover, a popular movement arising in Paris, in the most democratic sections, impelled them to energetic measures.

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[6] He was to be replaced on the 8th of May by Servan.

The new decrees of emergency and the *veto*

Then, blow on blow, the Assembly, whose majority was theirs, passed three decrees. One for *the deportation of refractory priests* from French territory, on demand by twenty active citizens of their commune and after approval by the directories of the districts and the departments (May 27). The second ordained the disbandment of the king's Constitutional Guard (May 29). The third provided for the formation of a corps of 20,000 men before Paris, in readiness to meet any danger to which the capital might be exposed (June 8). Louis XVI accepted the second with ill grace and *vetoed* the other two. Thus opened the final crisis.

Fall of the Girondin ministry

Roland wrote an outspoken letter to the king, pointing out the inevitably deplorable effect upon public opinion of his opposition to the decrees. Louis, much angered, dismissed the offender and, with him, Servan and Clavière (June 13). He counted upon Dumouriez; but the latter had not yet power to act apart from the Jacobins to whom he was becoming suspect; he, too, must perforce seem in favour of the two decrees; and the more so in that the sections of Paris were agitating, while the Assembly declared that the three dismissed ministers carried with them the regrets of the nation (June 15). The king, deaf to all remonstrances, refused to give way and Dumouriez, in his turn, resigned (June 16). He departed to take up the command of a division in the army of the North.

La Fayette's letter

The new minister was chosen from among the friends of the Triumvirate and of La Fayette, who, from his camp at Maubeuge, despatched an insolent letter to the king and to the Assembly. Supported, he said, by the sentiments of his soldiers, he expressed reprehension of the clubs, the fallen ministers and Dumouriez himself. His attitude, that of a general who lends himself to a faction, while the Assembly dared not punish it as it deserved, may have encouraged the king, but it certainly disquieted and irritated the patriotic party (June 18).

B. *The popular Days.*

On the 20th of June, a somewhat confused demonstration,

The Day of the 20th of June

in which the Jacobins took no direct part, and mobilised mainly by the population of the suburbs, called on the Assembly to display greater energy; and, as a protest against the *veto*, broke into the Tuileries. The king, taken by surprise and held up behind a large table in the embrasure of a window, stood helpless for two hours before a torrent of threatening tirades. He donned the red cap, he drank "*the health of the nation*," gulping wine from the neck of a bottle handed him by a National Guardsman, but he declined to go back on his *veto*. And when the tardy intervention of Pétion, Mayor of Paris, had induced the demonstrators to withdraw, it became clear that the only result of their effort had been to exasperate the *monarchiens* by what they regarded as an insufferable insult to the king's majesty.

Monarchist protests

Without delay, from some twenty departments, whose administrators still felt with the Feuillants, addresses poured in, expressing devotion to the king, with protests and threats against the Jacobins, currently regarded as responsible for the "outrage." Even in Paris the protests received more than 20,000 signatures; the bourgeois had been frightened by the proceedings of the mob. In the department of Ardèche and in that of Finistère there were actually Royalist risings. Finally, La Fayette had the audacity to leave his army and appear at the bar of the Assembly, on the 28th of June, in order to demand the dissolution of the Jacobin club and the punishment of those responsible for the day of the 20th of June. This fatuous proceeding should have been met with prompt arrest; but, in the general disturbance and dubiety of the public mind, he was able to remain in Paris long enough to make an attempt to arrange a *coup d'état*. He relied on his friends, who failed to stand by him, and on the support of the king, who declined his proposals, because the queen, playing for catastrophe as her best hope, declared it "*better to die than to be saved by La Fayette and the Constitutionalists.*" The politician-general re-

La Fayette at Paris

Results of his step

turned to his headquarters. He had done nothing but impel the Jacobins towards the Left and get the *monarchiens* confused with the bigoted reactionaries. The most active elements among the people, in Paris and in the departmental towns, were growing more and more violently hostile to a king who had shown himself, at the very least, incapable of defending, and who quite possibly was betraying, the country. The Jacobin societies furnished a framework and assured a unity to the movement; the municipalities themselves favoured it in many places. In their antagonism to the administrations of the departments and districts, composed of privileged men of the new order, they were filled with delight by the demonstration of the 20th of June.

The "Lamourette kiss" (July 7)

The majority of the Assembly, however, still clung to their chimerical hopes of maintaining a Constitution no longer desired either by king or by people. On the 7th of July, on the instance of *Lamourette*, the constitutional bishop of the department of the Rhône and Loire, occurred one of these effusions of sentiment by which men of that time deluded themselves into the optimistic belief that they were in good faith and agreement together; the deputies embraced in reconciliation all round and Louis XVI profited by the occasion to asseverate afresh in their presence his fidelity to his promises and his love for his people.

The "country in danger" (July 11)

Unfortunately this touching scene, since known as "*the Lamourette kiss*," had and could have no result. It changed neither minds nor hearts; it put no end to the differences which separated those who took part in it; above all it did not check the invasion now on the way. On the 11th of July, the Assembly, after some days of hesitation, decided to inform the people officially of the danger in which France lay, and to ask them for the means of salvation, which the government, by its own confession, could not command. It proclaimed *la patrie en danger* (the country in danger), and called all defenders of liberty to arms. This proclamation, read in every commune in the kingdom, stirred the country to its depths: volunteers began to pour in while feeling against the king rose higher and higher.

Gathering of the popular storm

For a month the storm gathered. Against the Assembly, impotent and vacillating, with just enough energy left to reiterate its attachment to the Constitution; against the Brissotins, alarmed by the advance of the democrats and trying to come to terms with the king in order to regain power and save the constitutional monarchy; against La Fayette, who pressed Louis XVI to fly from Paris and take refuge with his own army; against the king and queen, who, reckoning on the speedy victory of the invaders, rejected the advances of La Fayette no less than the proposals of the Girondins; against the conservatives and the reactionaries who were carrying on a resistance in the departmental administrations, in the constituted bodies, and even in the Assemblies of the sections in Paris,[7] popular feeling grew and gathered till it culminated, on the 10th of August, in a stroke of force. The prime authors of the movement were the democratic sections of Paris (Mauconseil, Lombards, Postes, Fontaine-de-Grenelle) which, from the end of July, demanded the dethronement of the king; next came municipalities, such as those of Marseilles, Dijon, Angers,

The authors of the movement

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[7] In the forty-eight sections for voting established in 1790 for the capital, was a small Assembly of "active" citizens. It had its centre, a place where in time of trouble it met every evening; a permanent committee authorised on the 25th of July, 1792. The sixty battalions of the National Guard were composed of the active citizens of these sections. The sentiments of these sections were not uniform. Those of the great commercial and banking quarters (Arsenal, Notre-Dame, Henri IV, St. Louis, Oratoire, Halle-au-Blé and others) were *constitutional:* the industrial quarters (Lombards, Mauconseil, Bonne-Nouvelle and others) and the faubourgs (Quinze-Vingt, Gobelins and others) and those where resided the advanced journalists and the leaders of the revolutionary movement (Théâtre-Français, Luxembourg, Croix-Rouge and others) were more or less *hostile to the court, to aristocrats, and to the king.* On the 27th of July, a *central bureau of correspondence* between the sections was organised at the Hôtel de Ville by means of which they could concentrate and agree on common action. Many were beginning to admit passive citizens to their sessions; others already held public meetings.

Montpellier, who petitioned in the same sense; some *fédérés;* that is to say, various delegations sent by the National Guards of the departments to the festival of the Federation on the 14th of July, whom democrats like Robespierre harangued and incited against the king and his adherents; finally some of those battalions of volunteers who passed through Paris before joining the army, brimming over with exalted sentiments and demonstrative patriotism. The entry into the town of the battalion of Marseilles on the 30th of July, to the strains of the *Hymn of the Army of the Rhine* [8] produced an intense emotion, on which the Parisian democrats played. The Mayor of Paris, Pétion, reiterated counsels of moderation and composure and did all in his power to prevent the organisation of a new 20th of June, which was openly foretold by the revolutionary sections who intended it to be decisive.

The manifesto of Brunswick

An insane indiscretion exemplifying the political unwisdom of the queen and her friends brought to nothing the efforts of the Constitutionalists to ward off catastrophe. On the 1st of August there arrived in the already seething capital a manifesto by the Duke of Brunswick, generalissimo of the invading armies, but actually drawn up by an emigrant, the Count of Limon and a certain Pellenc, formerly secretary to Mirabeau, but now in the pay of the court. The queen had demanded this declaration from the allies, thinking it must inevitably strike terror into the hearts of the "patriots"! Its readers learnt that the invaders' one object was to "*release the king, the queen and the royal family from their captivity,*" that the city of Paris must "*make instant submission,*" and that if the palace of the Tuileries "*was forced and violated,*" if the "*least outrage*" was committed on the king or his family, the allies would exact

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[8] A work of a young engineer officer named *Rouget de l'Isle.* This *War-Song for the Army of the Rhine*—such is its authenticated title—had been sung for the first time by its author at Strasbourg at the house of Dietrich, the mayor (April 25, 1792). Paris knew it through the Marseillais, hence the name which it has kept, the *Hymn of the Marseillais, la Marseillaise.*

"*an exemplary and ever memorable revenge by delivering over the town of Paris to military execution and total overthrow.*" Every "patriot" felt the insult and the most advanced sections (that of the Quinze-Vingt leading) gave the Assembly to understand that, if before the 9th of August it had not provided for the public safety and given due attention to their petitions, they would take action themselves. This they in fact did, and their lead, with some hesitancy, was followed by most of the other sections.

The Day of the 10th of August

On the 10th, at midnight, the tocsin began to sound. Commissioners delegated by forty-eight sections met at the Hôtel de Ville and there constituted a committee ready to supersede the legal Commune. Pétion, the mayor, was placed under strong guard in his own house; Mandat, the commander of the National Guard, who the day before had organised the protection of the Tuileries, was summoned to the Hôtel de Ville, discharged from his post and arrested; next, at six o'clock in the morning, the commissioners proclaimed the legal Commune provisionally suspended and installed themselves in its place. An hour later began the siege of the palace: 900 Swiss, 250 to 300 Knights of Saint-Louis with inadequate arms, a few hundred aristocratic National Guards, in all not much more than 1500 men, formed the defence. At the first rush of the Marseillais upon the Place du Carrousel, the king's adherents took fright, and induced him to demand asylum from the Assembly, which, by the mouth of Vergniaud, its President, assured him that it would defend "*with zeal all constituted authorities*," reassured and spoke him fair, and installed him with the queen and their children in the little short-hand writer's (*logotachygraphe*) room, behind the president's chair, since the Constitution did not allow him to be present when the representatives of the people deliberated. The fighting then continued out of his presence and to no purpose, his flight and approach to the Assembly being tantamount to an acknowledgment of defeat and capitulation. The Swiss held their own and killed or wounded 376 of the assailants; but about ten in the morning they were overwhelmed and swept off their feet: 600 of them fell and the palace was invaded.

Suspension of the king

The victory of the people was indisputable; the Assembly confirmed it that very day by a decree for the *suspension of the king*, by entrusting to the *National Convention*, which it proposed to convoke, on a basis of election by *universal suffrage*, the task of finally deciding on his fate. Meanwhile Louis XVI was to take up his abode in the palace of the Luxembourg, but the insurrectional Commune decreed otherwise, and he was, by their initiative, confined with his family in the prison of the Temple.

IV

The new situation

A. *The rival powers face to face*

The Day of the 10th of August and the action of the insurrectional Commune had revealed the hidden mainspring of the Revolution, the prevalent opinion to which were due the worst excesses of the revolutionary movement and the terrible troubles in which it involved the country; the belief, that is, of *the sovereign people* in its right to control from hour to hour the action of its legal representatives, and, if it should think this inadequate, to supersede them and take direct action on its own account. Unfortunately, the sovereign people is sometimes only embodied in a coterie or at most in a minority of men speaking and acting in its name, whose regard for legality is at the mercy of their passions. The Assembly which had impotently looked on at the overthrow of the throne, and had had no choice but to sanction the accomplished fact, hoped for a prompt return to legality, the reinstatement of the old Commune at the Hôtel de Ville and the dissolution of the insurgent Commune. But the latter, advised by Robespierre, decided to retain its power and to continue to force upon the deputies the passing of radical measures, for the most part, highly distasteful to themselves. When the *executive power* had been constituted in the shape of a ministry, in which Roland, Clavière, and Servan resumed their places and Danton received the portfolio of Justice, three rival authorities in reality stood face to face with one another, ill-defined, ill-distinguished, all three ambitious for the upper hand in the direction of general affairs, and ready to enter into conflict on all or nearly all questions. Thus the period between the 10th of August and the 20th of September, when the Convention first met, is one of reciprocal onslaughts, struggles and strokes of violence, which through the influence which it exercises upon the course of the Revolution, holds a place of its own in its history.

B. ***The reception given to the Parisian Revolution***

1. By the departments

The Day of the 10th of August was the work of Paris and it was questionable how the provinces and the army would take its results. The departments of the Southeast with most of those in the East approved the movement, which, on the other hand, encountered more or less active resistance in the Centre, the West, the Southwest and especially the North, among the departmental administrations. But as the objectors formed nowhere any compact body, could not communicate without difficulty among themselves, and were joined by only a few municipalities, the Assembly, to overcome opposition, felt it sufficient to suspend some departmental directories (in the Rhône-and-Loire, the Moselle, the Aisne, the Somme). The army gave more anxiety. La Fayette endeavoured to stir up his troops and come to an understanding with the other generals of the army of the North, his object being a combined march upon Paris. The discontent and even hostility of a large number of officers, which took the form of a refusal to take the oath of fidelity to the *Nation and the Law*—without *the king*—or else by a more or less prolonged hesitation to take it, were, however, not strong enough to induce men, anxious to do their patriotic duty in face of the enemy, to revolt against the accomplished fact. La Fayette found few followers and, fear-

2. By the army

The flight of La Fayette

ing arrest, he fled from Sedan on the 19th of August with a few officers, and fell into the hands of the Austrians who kept him prisoner. He was no man for politics, and was always a failure where they were concerned. The dismissal of some obstinate recalcitrants and a few threats were sufficient to recall the army to its civic duty. By the end of August, it was reconciled to the fall of the throne and had turned its whole mind to the defence of the threatened frontiers. Some commissioners of the Executive Council, others of the Assembly, others even of the Commune made visits to the armies and the departments —preludes to the great *missions* through which the Convention is to govern in the future—in order to explain and to justify the suspension of Louis XVI.

C. *The action of the Commune*

The exaltation of patriotism and the obsession of treason

Yet, the crisis which had culminated on the 10th of August, the emotion aroused by that day of blood, the publication of the documents discovered at the Tuileries, and proving the relations of the court with the foreigner, the growing conviction the Revolution was endangered by innumerable traitors, the disturbances in the South and in Brittany, ascribed to the work of the *aristocrats* and the refractory priests, above all the danger presented by the invasion, in which the early successes of the Prussians caused instant and increasing terror: all these convergent perturbations gradually raised the patriotic sentiments of the popular classes to a pitch of exaltation in which the most crazy and execrable decisions seemed to their authors quite natural and indeed inevitable.

The tribunal of the 17th of August

The Commune had demanded and, after great pains, obtained from the Assembly the creation of a special tribunal for the trial "*of the crimes of the 10th of August*"; that is to say, for the trial of participants in the defence of the Tuileries against the people (August 17). The patriotic sections promptly found that this tribunal was proving too lenient.

The measures against the *suspects*

Under pressure from the Commune the Assembly took severe measures against the *émigrés* (their property to be sequestrated and sold, their wives and children to be held as hostages. Decrees of the 14th and 15th of August) and against the refractory priests (deportation to Guiana of all who did not leave France within fifteen days. Decree of the 26 of August). A start was made with the arrest and imprisonment of *suspects;* domiciliary visits, decreed on the instance of Danton [9] and begun on the 30th of August, produced 3000 arrests in Paris alone. About the 1st of September, it was rumoured that the imprisoned aristocrats were fomenting a huge conspiracy and in the sections where excitement ran highest opinion became more and more convinced that only by "*summary procedure*" could the people completely eliminate enemies and traitors.

The Assembly against the Commune: its failure

The Assembly, after diverse indirect essays to that end, definitely decided that the Commune of the 10th of August should be broken. Having decreed that the Commune had "*deserved well of the country*" it ordered it to dissolve, to be replaced by a municipal body, duly elected. The Commune did not obey, and the Assembly, which had no means of compelling it to dissolve, was left powerless before it in return for its vain attempt. On the 2d of September, the Commune reorganised its *Committee of Surveillance* upon which it placed Marat, who was haunted and almost mad with fear of conspirators and traitors. And that day the news of the investment of Verdun by the Prussians reached Paris. It occasioned a demonstration, dramatic in the manner dear to men of that time, and raising to the highest pitch their anxiety and their patriotic emotion: alarm guns, a tocsin, the closing of the barriers of Paris; a proclamation of the Commune, ordering the formation of an army to defend the capital. Five or six sections, possibly in-

The *Committee of Surveillance* and Marat spired by the Committee of Surveillance, were already demanding death for the *conspirators* in the prisons.

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[9] Born in 1759, an advocate at the Councils of the king, under the Ancien Régime, closely in touch with public affairs, he had plunged into the Revolution and had played a prominent part in the club of the Cordeliers. He became *Substitut du Procureur de la Commune de Paris* (Substitute for the Procurator of the Commune of Paris) (November, 1791) and after the 10th of August, 1792, Minister of Justice.

The massacres of September

About two in the afternoon, the slaughter began at St. Germain Abbey, and later at the Carmes of the Rue de Vaugirard. For nearly four days (from the 2d to the 5th) the various prisons in the city were visited by the slaughterers, workmen and petty tradesmen, and, sometimes after the semblance of a trial and with some discrimination, sometimes pell-mell and at haphazard, the throats of the prisoners were cut. The sight and the smell of blood intoxicated the butchers and turned them into wild beasts. The number of the victims is estimated as at most 1400 or at least 1100. The Committee of Surveillance issued a circular to the departmental municipalities recommending that they also should administer this "*salutary purge*." Some massacres occurred which, in fact, anticipated the circular. They were mostly the work of volunteers on their way to the frontier; such was the case in Versailles, Rheims, Meaux, Caen, Lyons and other places.

Their consequences

For the moment, the authorities did nothing to arrest this mad thirst for blood, *nor were any found to condemn it*, either in the Commune or in the Assembly or among ministers. All seemed to have regarded it as a terrible but perhaps necessary *example* showing traitors what they might expect from the wrath of the people. Roland wrote on the 3d of September: "*Yesterday was a day over whose events a veil should be drawn. I know that the people, terrible in their revenge, yet did justice in some sort.*" In reality, these frightful massacres, in their inception, possibly, no more than the reaction of outraged patriotism, degenerated later into mere savage butchery. The human brute once let loose is not easily chained up again. Prisoners under the common law, women and children from whom France had nothing to fear, had perished, killed almost for sport, helter-skelter with aristocrats, refractory priests and suspects of every kind. The foreigner, looking on in cold blood, shuddered with horror at the tale of these excesses, and pronounced on their account severe sentence on the whole Revolution. Later on, when men's spirits had regained self-control, the Girondins exploited the horrible episode to frame a case in their own favour not only against Marat and the Commune, which might have been legitimate, but against all their opponents of the Left: Danton, Robespierre and all who ultimately formed the *Mountain* in the Convention. They used these sad memories as a mask for all the personal rancours, all the accumulated animosities of the last months of the Legislative Assembly.[10]

D. *The anti-monarchic movement*

The massacres of September had at least one immediate result: they struck terror into the Royalists, whose newspapers, too, the Commune had suppressed since the 12th of August. On the 11th a start was made with the destruction of all statues of kings and all emblems of monarchy in Paris. An anti-monarchic flow of opinion similarly became apparent in several provincial towns, in the Vosges, the Bouches-du-Rhône, the Jura, La Rochelle, Strasbourg. Those men, who, anxious above all things to preserve the monarchic principle, had thought of offering the crown to the Duke of York or to the Duke of Brunswick, became silent. On the 4th of September, the deputies to whom the "patriots" had too generously attributed this plan, adumbrated by only a few among them, denounced it as an "*atrocious calumny*" and swore to oppose with their whole strength kingship and kings. However, neither the chief leaders, nor Robespierre, nor Danton, nor Marat, nor the clubs yet openly uttered the word *Republic;* when the elections to the Convention took place in the beginning of September, neither the Jacobins nor any authorised person had taken up any

Hesitation on the idea of the Republic

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[10] It would be altogether unjust to forget that the popular outbursts of the anti-revolutionists were no less violent than those of the "patriots," when the latter were beside themselves with excitement; the massacres committed by the Vendéens at the beginning of their insurrection were quite as bad as the *massacres of September.*

definite position as to the final form to be given to the government, and it may be believed without extravagance that, at the bottom of their hearts, most members of the two Assemblies, either of that which ended or of that which was beginning, dreaded far more than they desired the Republic. But a force, greater than their own will, that which issues from the implacable logic of events, impelled them in their own despite to a decision which had now become inevitable.

The abolition of Royalty (September 21)

The Convention was constituted on the 20th of September. To it, on the next day, the 21st, the Legislative Assembly transferred its powers and, on the same day, royalty was abolished *by a unanimous vote.* What was proposed in its place was not stated, but, that evening, the Ministers, by the mouth of Monge, attended to congratulate it on the "*proclamation of the Republic*" and Roland, on the same day, issued a circular inviting all administrative authorities to "*proclaim the Republic*" on the logical grounds that the abolition of royalty involved a republican government. On the 22d of September, the Assembly authenticated this conclusion, and decided that all public proceedings should date from *Year I of the Republic.* There was, properly speaking, no formal proclamation that the new régime was now established.

The Republic in being (September 22, 1792)

Conclusion

Thus in three years the political ineptitude of the king and the court, the successive betrayals of a misplaced popular confidence, the advent and subsequent rise to power of the most active democratic elements, together with a resistless concatenation of circumstances, had brought ruin upon a monarchy to which Frenchmen were still sincerely attached in 1789, and its supersession by a government desired by almost none, even after the 10th of August, and still dreaded at the time by even the most unflinching revolutionaries, such as a Marat or a Robespierre. France, in her patriotism, accepted it, and indeed it had proved to be a necessity for the prosperity of the country. The old-time *loyalty* which identified the kingdom with the king, religion with the monarchy, which had hitherto commanded the devotion of Frenchmen, gave place to a cult of country and a worship of the nation, at times fanatical. A momentous epoch in the history of the French people has ended; another begins.

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CHAPTER XXIX

FROM THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO THE TERRORIST GOVERNMENT. THE CONVENTION IN 1792 AND IN 1793

I

The new Assembly

A. *The Convention.* Meaning of the term

THE term *a Convention* meant to its contemporaries an Assembly charged with the revision of the Constitution. The overthrow of royalty had necessitated this revision in 1792, but the new Assembly found itself, from the first, faced with a task more urgent than the initiation of debate on constitutional points; it was imperative to provide for the defence of the country and to devise remedies for the disadvantages which were found to arise, in view of the imminent danger from abroad, from the decentralisation carried out by the Constitutional Assembly.

Elections to the Convention

The Convention had been elected under a suffrage which was universal, but of two degrees; that is to say, all citizens, whether *passive* or *active*, elected the *Electoral Assemblies*, who in their turn chose the deputies. The *aristocrats*, the *monarchiens* (monarchists), the *Feuillants*, had generally refrained from appearing at the poll; in some places (at Le Mans, for example, and in the Doubs) "*citizens justly suspected of incivism*" were excluded from the electoral body. Moreover the working classes, the lower classes, either abstained or allowed their voting to be dictated in such a manner that the elections were controlled by the bourgeois and the landowners. The *deputies were, in fact, the choice of a resolute minority.* It chose them in its own image: "patriots," friends of liberty, men ready for great sacrifices in its defence, but also determined foes to all that is now known as *socialism* or—as it was then

The spirit of the deputies

called—*the Agrarian Law*[1] and foes, at bottom, for the most part, to the equalitarian democracy, which they will accept or rather submit to, perforce, in the great crisis of 1793-1794. The Montagnards will even seek support from the people and appear to propose *a class policy;* but, as has been justly remarked, "*this policy did not come from the innermost hearts of the people.*" "*It was a policy of emergency, a plebeian method,*" says Karl Marx, "*of making an end of kings, priests, nobles and all enemies of the Revolution.*" With the same aim, Brissot himself, under the Legislative Assembly, had already thought of an intimate alliance with the masses. This time the alliance was to be made in opposition to himself and his friends, and between his enemies and the people.

The electoral contests

The elections, unlike those of our day, did not confront parties with parties, and programmes with programmes, but merely candidates with candidates except in Paris, where the Brissotins were opposed to the men of the Commune of the 10th of August, who, incidentally, beat them. In the departments, for which these differences were still obscure, the electors were mainly concerned to choose good "patriots," men who would defend liberty from its enemies within and without. *Buzot,* who was to be reckoned among the most notable Girondins, was elected in the Eure, together with the brothers *Lindet,* who were to be prominent among the Montagnards. As the

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[1] During the summer of 1792 occurred a certain amount of propaganda in favour of the *Agrarian Law;* its authors were for the most part certain bold priests (at Paris, Abbé Jacques Roux, vicar of St. Nicolas des Champs; in the Cher, Petitjean, curé of Épineuil; in Beauce, Pierre Dolivier, curé of Mauchamp) and publicists more or less authoritative (Lange at Lyons, Nicolas de Bonneville at Paris). These men had no common doctrine; they did not even form a group. Their demonstrations were nevertheless sufficient to disturb the bourgeois of the Legislative Assembly which took violent part against them and Robespierre himself described the Agrarian Law "*as an absurd scarecrow presented to the stupid by the perverse.*" The Girondins had appeared to believe that there was serious danger in those incoherent and indefinite communistic stirrings and Thomas Lindet, Bishop of Évreux, though a member of the Mountain, could write on the 20th of August, 1792, "*The Revolution is taking us far. Beware of the Agrarian Law.*" He was mistaken; the hour of socialism was still far away.

Girondins had made themselves well known under the Legislative Assembly, they were elected in great number.[2] Madame Roland accordingly declared that she had been "*given fresh life*" by the elections and Brissot sang a paean of victory. She and he, however, were both under illusions as to the real scope of their success. This, though it had returned to the Convention all the great Girondins of the Legislative Assembly, had failed to assure them a majority, as the event was soon to prove.

B. *Parties or tendencies in the Assembly*

1. The *Brissotins*

It has already been said that men of that time were reluctant to combine in *constituted parties;* but while reserving to themselves freedom of voting as they pleased upon details, they were divided at least by certain general *tendencies*, divergent enough to make marked divisions between them. Thus, the two tendencies which, in the last months of the Legislative Assembly, had set the Brissotins of the Assembly and of the Ministry against the Democrats of the sections and of the Commune of the 10th of August and against Danton, Robespierre and Marat, existed in the Convention from the beginning. The former, deputies from the departments, were still haunted by the massacres of September and by bitter memories of the humiliation and coercion to which they had been subjected by the insurrectionary Commune. They dreaded the demagogy and tyranny of the sections; and their not unfounded apprehensions took the form of personal rancours, prejudiced animosities, jealousies and provocations, under the influence of a woman, Madame Roland, intelligent beyond question, but passionate and embittered, already disappointed in her ambitions and more ready to argue than to be moved by argument, however reasonable. They thus started with a profound suspicion of Paris.

The Democrats who sit on the upper benches of the

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[2] Mathiez, *La Révolution française,* vol. ii, p. 69. It is to be noted that in the total of 750 deputies of the Assembly there were but *two* workmen: an armourer, Noël Pointe, elected in the Rhône-et-Loire, and a wool comber, Armonville, elected in the Marne.

2. The *Montagnards*

Assembly and were known as the *Montagnards*, believe that the people have saved the Revolution and that only the people can make it victorious over its innumerable foes. They believe the stroke of violence of the 2d to the 5th of September to have been necessitated by the failure of the Girondin majority of the Legislative Assembly and its ministry to deal roundly and in due time with the conspirators. They suspect their adversaries of a secret tenderness for the monarchy and the aristocrats, and of intending, in their hatred of Paris, to break up the national unity among departmental *federations*, and to *decapitalise* the great city; that is to say, to deprive it of its dignity as capital. They recall the previous suggestion of Roland for the removal of the seat of government and the Assembly to the south of France, and the favour shown by other Girondins to the suggestion. They are greatly annoyed by the proposal, to be renewed in the first days of the Convention, that the deputies should be surrounded with a strong guard of federates from the departments, to safeguard them against the Parisian sections. The leaders of the Mountain are deputies of Paris; it is on Paris that they base their activities, and it is in Paris that they place their trust.

The opposition between the Gironde and the Mountain

Attempts have been made to reduce the opposition between the Gironde and the Mountain to this single difference of opinion as to the part to be assigned to the capital in the conduct of the Revolution. This is certainly an over-simplification of differences proved by experience to be irreconcilable. It is far from true that the Girondins as a whole were more *moderate* than the Montagnards either in thought or deed, or less wholehearted as supporters of the Republic. It is quite possible that their undeserved reputation for moderation came from the deadly imputation of *moderatism* hurled at them by their adversaries, and from the fact that, being the first to be vanquished in the great revolutionary campaign, they also came first under the guillotine. Those who survived and regained power after the 10th Thermidor were far from being shining examples of moderation in passion and mildness in revenge. Nor during the first months of the Convention, when they seemed the stronger party, were the resolutions they adopted always moderate. On the other hand, Brissot, their leader, and Condorcet, their most remarkable thinker, were among the earliest advocates of the republican idea.

Deeper causes of conflict

If, however, the Gironde and the Mountain are surveyed as a whole, every allowance being made for the personal and accidental exceptions always possible in the political habitudes of the period, substantial and deep-seated reasons for conflict between them emerge into view. The Girondins included, as a contemporary remarked, "*a large number of landowners and enlightened citizens*"; they had the opinions and the prejudices, they supported the interests, of the social circles from which they were drawn. They feared the forces which issue from an ignorant and rude populace, its sudden caprices and violent decisions; they were revolted by the radical and brutal revolutionary measures which took the place of ordered law under a régime of abnormality which was at the same time one of coercion: domiciliary visits, forced circulation of assignats, taxation of food, requisitions, the suspension of individual liberty, emergency tribunals—everything, in short, which runs counter to the activity, the normal life, the respect for property, the industrial and commercial profits of the bourgeois, thus subjected to the rule of obscure forces from below, all that has been called in a single phrase *la politique de salut public* (the policy of public safety), that policy which the Commune of the 10th of August had compelled the Legislative Assembly, willy-nilly, to accept. The Montagnards, though bourgeois, too, in origin, were elected by the people and represented the popular classes, who were only too ready to make short work of strict law and of individual rights for the sake of "*saving the country and liberty*"; to them the principles, so often on their lips, mattered little, compared with any need of the moment and they readily relegated them to a better future, for application. *Salus populi suprema lex esto* (let the safety of the people be the supreme law), was their motto and their excuse. They had little concern for the interests of fortune's favourites and they would declare that the least which a good citizen could do when his country was in straits was to sacrifice his material possessions.

Importance of the social disagreement which this implied

The Girondins, by the pen of Brissot, accused them of being "*disorganisers,*" of proposing "*to bring everything to a dead level: property, well-being, the price of food, the different services rendered to society . . . even talent, knowledge, virtue.*" Robespierre retorted by proclaiming that those were but imitation patriots "*who wished to establish the Republic merely for themselves*" and "*who proposed to govern only in the interests of the rich and of public officials*" instead of "*according to the principles of equality and common interest.*" With singular insight, and almost without exaggeration, he imputed to them "*the eternal tendency to connect in thought the ideas of sedition and brigandage with those of the people and poverty.*"

The prejudices and resentments of the Girondins

Thus, the adversaries, the Girondins and the Montagnards, each persuaded that they were in the right, each convinced that concession or compromise meant "*the destruction of liberty*" and "*the betrayal of the country,*" were henceforward to be in conflict. The attack was delivered by the former, who were carried away by a torrent of impatient and blind rancours; but even the better and longer control of these could only have slightly delayed the inevitable breach, so different and irreconcilable were the *mentalities* of the two opponents. Yet counsels of mutual conciliation and concession were not withheld from the two warring groups; they came even from the patriot sections, and Danton made great exertions to realise them. But no good feeling could prevail against the prejudices of Roland

and his wife, which, by the malice of fate, found credit among the whole Brissotin group, in which Buzot, in love with Madame Roland, acquired a mischievous ascendancy.

3. The *Centre*

Advantages of the position of the Girondins

Between the Gironde and the Mountain, the great mass of deputies called *the Centre, the Belly, the Plain,* and also *the Marsh,* able to make a majority as it pleased, was to follow this or that impulse which circumstances made for the moment preponderant. At the beginning the advantage seemed with the Girondins. They controlled the executive power, for the ministers came from their ranks; Danton had left the Ministry of Justice to become a deputy; the Minister of the Interior (Roland) influenced opinion through newspapers, which he inspired and subsidised. Pétion, re-elected Mayor of Paris (October 15) and chosen by the Assembly as its first President,[3] presided, too, over the Jacobins and was one of the Girondins. The departmental administrations, the tribunals, the municipalities were crowded with their partisans, all the *enlightened* and well-to-do citizens were in sympathy with them among a people still largely indifferent to political life. They had drawn a number of Feuillants to their side. The army itself, in which Dumouriez seemed likely to play the leading part, appeared to have fallen into their hands. They had, on their side, the strength derived from their past, their experience in government, in their exercise of executive power during the great troubles in 1792, the prestige of the patriotism which had declared *the war on kings,* and whose prime concern was for the country and its danger. And finally, the most brilliant speakers of the Assembly were to be found in their ranks.

Girondin divisions

Unfortunately, while they were unanimous in excluding the Mountain from the direction of affairs, on all other questions they were often at variance among themselves; Buzot, Barbaroux, Isnard, for instance, distrusted Paris far more than Brissot, Vergniaud or Gensonné. From the beginning of

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[3] The Convention changes its President every month.

November onwards *a third party* makes its appearance, intermediate between such ultra Girondins as Louvet, or Buzot and the Montagnards. The journalist, Camille Desmoulins, is with them and Pétion, Barère, Rabaud-Saint-Étienne, Cordorcet and even Vergniaud, a fact which illustrates the marked differences possible between Brissotins.

The real strength of the Mountain

The *Mountain*, supported by the Commune, by the really active Parisian sections, by the club of the Cordeliers, and speedily obtaining mastery over the Jacobins, whom the Girondins, on the advice of Brissot, deserted, and through them, over their affiliated societies in the departments, thus controlled the more compact and more easily mobilised force. The arguments which they were soon to employ in order to put pressure on the Centre—namely, demonstrations in arms by the people of Paris—were more potent than speech, however entrancing. For this reason the immediate future was theirs. The webs woven by the Girondins in the salons which they frequent were as dust in the balance against decisions made by the people in the great clubs and indeed make their authors look not unlike mere factious intriguers. "*Those of the faction*" is one of the expressions by which they are designated in the writings of the time.

II

Conflict between the Gironde and the Mountain

The Girondins were the first to attack on the 24th of September by raising a twofold question: that of responsibility for the massacres and for the dictatorship. They alleged that the action of the Commune concealed a design to place the supreme authority in the hands of Robespierre, Marat and Danton. They aimed particularly at the first of the three. Thus began a struggle, interrupted by some appeals for agreement, some truces, more apparent than real, which was to be continued for eight months, from incident to incident, confused and of small interest. Yet a struggle most bitter, and one in which the Girondins exhibited a lack of political sense and a small-mindedness equally deplorable. Danton, in saying one day (November 30) to one of them (Guadet), "*You do not know how to forgive, you do not know how to sacrifice your resentment for the sake of the country. You are opinionated and you will perish,*" foretold the fate of them all and put his finger on its main cause.

A. *The trial of the king*

Why it had become inevitable

A great question definitely brought forward on the 16th of October, by a petition from the Jacobins of the town of Auxerre, postponed the decisive engagement between the two parties. What was to be decided in regard to the person of Louis XVI? The petition demanded that he should be brought to trial. It was evident to all that the king could not be kept indefinitely in prison, and that it was necessary to decide what should be done with him, the more so as the documents found in the Tuileries, on the 10th of August, proved his multiplied assertions of fidelity to the Constitution and devotion to the Nation to be a tissue of falsehoods. There could be no question of his release without due examination of his case. But the Girondin majority were afraid to take up the question and sought to gain time. Popular pressure becoming too strong to allow of further postponement, the inevitable had to be accepted. For the rest, while it might be a painful matter for men, who had hardly yet ceased to be royalists, to look on the king as an ordinary misdemeanant under the common law, while so many were still imbued with the scruples of the Constituent Assembly, while to them the question of bringing a king to trial had *religious implications*, it had become dangerous to appear to evade what the "patriots" represented to the deputies as a duty. For this reason, after some preliminary debates, the Convention appointed the Girondin, *Valazé*, to present a report on the matter. He decided for accusation (November 6) and, on the next day, for more urgent and stronger reasons, *Mailhe* of the Mountain came to the same conclusion. It was

The indictment drawn up

decided that the Convention itself, as representing the Nation, should constitute the court. Attempts ventured on by some deputies to secure the abandonment of the trial on the ground that the king was constitutionally inviolable, or by the assertion that his condemnation would provoke a reaction possibly fatal to the Republic, were nullified by the discovery of *the iron chest* [4] (November 20), a secret safe fixed at the Tuileries by a locksmith named Germain who revealed its existence to Roland. In it numerous letters were found which rendered unquestionable the intrigues of Louis XVI. The king, indeed, declared that he remembered none of them and did not recognise even those signed by his own hand.

The two theses presented

1. That of Louis XVI

The trial began on the 11th of December. It was a clash between theses, and still more, between mental attitudes totally different. The king sinned against good faith in his repudiation of the evidence; he had intrigued against the Revolution, negotiated with foreign princes, solicited and favoured their armed intervention. He had constantly disregarded and violated every engagement he had made, every oath he had taken, *yet he did not believe himself guilty*. Convinced to his heart's core, by his education and every condition of his environment, of the inviolable supremacy of his right divine, habitually reiterating to himself, according to the doctrine of Louis XIV, that he was, in fact, the Nation, that it found complete expression in his sacred person, he regarded the exigencies of the Revolution as so many sacrilegious attacks upon his sacred privileges, and his own promises expedients in emergency, dictated by necessity and justified by compulsion. He had never admitted that he could ever be called upon to keep them. In his eyes, the salvation of the monarchy was the same thing as that of the kingdom, and while he might regret his inevitable recourse, in sore need, to obscure and tortuous methods, his conscience could not blame him for their use, seeing that the malice of his enemies had robbed him of those which were rightly his own by God's ordinance.

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[4] In particular, proofs of the "treason" of Mirabeau were found in it. The Jacobins broke his bust and the Convention had a curtain put over his picture in the Hall of Session.

2. That of the Convention

The most moderate *Conventionnels* (members of the Convention) remembered that he had broken oaths repeatedly taken, that he had accepted the Constitution subordinating him to the Nation, and that he had afterwards and deliberately played traitor and endeavoured to overthrow the new régime. Invested with a public office, chief magistrate of the State, he had used his powers to dupe those whom he had sworn to protect and to serve. His perjury and his treason were indisputable, and the country had the right to call him to account.

The trial as a matter of *principle*

Others took higher ground and asserted that the trial of Louis must be an affirmation of principle, the preamble to an indictment of the "*gang of kings*," a decisive proof that the Republic had triumphed [5] over the Monarchy. One of the youngest deputies in the Assembly, the handsome and ferocious *Saint-Just*, declared, on the 13th of November, in an impetuous oration, that "*those who think twice about the just punishment of a king can never be founders of a Republic. . . . To judge a king like a citizen! This word will amaze a dispassionate posterity. To judge is to apply the law. The law establishes a relation of justice. What kind of relation of justice can there be between humanity and kings? . . . Royalty is an eternal crime; an innocent ruler is an impossibility*," and on the 3d of December Robespierre went still further: "*Here is no suit to be pleaded. . . . You have not merely to pass sentence for or against a man, but to make provision for the public safety,*

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[5] The Englishman, Thomas Paine, who became a naturalised Frenchman for love of the Revolution, claimed that "*we must cure the world of this pest of kings,*" and he said, "*we have one of these individuals in our power. He will put us on the track of a general conspiracy among them. There is also a strong presumption against M. Guelfe, Elector of Hanover, in his position as King of England.*"

to play Providence on behalf of the Nation . . . thus Louis cannot be tried. He is already condemned. Either he is condemned or the Republic is not acquitted."

Hesitation and debate

That the king was guilty could no longer be contested, but many people still doubted whether it was expedient to condemn him. The most notable Girondins agreed in their fear of the danger to France which might arise through feeling in foreign countries if the head of the king should fall. Vergniaud gave eloquent expression to these fears on the 31st of December. The Girondins therefore demanded that the judgment of the Convention should be ratified by the people. The Royalists, not daring to attempt the king's deliverance, issued placards and pamphlets which began to work on the compassion of the lower classes: an appeal to the people might at least save Louis his life.

The questions put

The counsel for the king, de Sèze, Malesherbes, and Tronchet, failed to dispel the bad impression made by the documents at the disposal of the court and by the cross-examination of the accused, and, on the 14th of January, it was decided that the Convention should vote in turn on the questions of *guilty or not guilty*, on *that of an appeal to the people*, finally, *upon the penalty*. The triple vote would be given on a *roll call* so that each deputy would publicly take responsibility. From the 15th to the 19th of January, the Assembly sat night and day, and the warring opinions which, for nearly three months, had clashed together in turmoil, only with difficulty attained a clear conclusion supported by a majority.

The voting

On the first point: *Is the king guilty?* A dozen deputies abstained, but *all of those who voted* declared "*Louis Capet guilty of conspiracy against the general safety of the State.*" On the second point: *shall the sentence be subject to ratification by the people?* The answer was *No*, by 424 votes to 287. On the third point: *What shall be the penalty?* there was some indecision; 26 deputies voted for death, with a suggestion of a reprieve. A second vote was taken, which gave a sentence of death by 387 votes to 334. The question of *reprieve* having been raised, it was made the subject of a last deliberation of the Assembly; it was rejected by 380 to 310 (January 20).[6]

The execution (January 21)

On the following day Louis XVI was executed at twenty-two minutes past ten in the morning, on the Place de la Révolution, now the Place de la Concorde. The stationing of a large body of troops about the scaffold by the foresight of the Executive Council was probably a superfluous precaution; no untoward incident occurred and the general feeling was, as far as we can judge, almost lukewarm. An old king's life-guardsman named Philippe de Pâris, who had killed, with a sabre, a deputy, Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau, on the 20th of January, excited scarcely less interest. The melancholy lot of "*this martyr to liberty*" interested the people quite as much as the fate of the "*tyrant.*" Throughout the country, as in Paris, the dominant sentiment towards Louis XVI appeared one of indifference.

General importance of the event

Henceforward all the "*regicides*" are directly and personally interested in saving the Republic; for a restoration would undoubtedly cost them dear. One, Le Bas, well expressed this fact on the 20th of January: "*We are committed to our course; the roads are broken behind us. Willy-nilly we must go forward. At this moment more than ever before our one motto must be 'Vivre libre ou mourir'* " (freedom or death).

B. *Resumption of the struggle between Gironde and Mountain*

At the time of the king's execution the Gironde had already fallen low in the opinion of the "patriots," then the only citizens of real account in France. The dismissal of Roland, who left the Ministry of the Interior on the 22d of January, was the outward and visible sign of their decline. The struggle between the two extreme groups became fiercer and more direct. I shall not enter into its details; they are extremely confused. It is an entanglement of petty episodes, interwoven with personal quarrels, all to us of little interest. I will outline only the general concatenation of events which resulted in a cataclysm for the Girondins.

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[6] It should be remarked that in these debates the Girondins did not appear as one body. Thus Condorcet, Boyer-Fonfrède, Daunou, Ducos and others voted against the appeal to the people; Vergniaud, Guadet, Buzot, Pétion, Brissot, etc., voted for death with reprieve; Ducos, Boyer-Fonfrède, Barbaroux, Isnard, Gensonné and others for unconditional death.

How the Girondins discredited themselves

The financial and economic situation was not good; the growth in expenditure, due to the need of adding to the army in view of the European coalition initiated at the end of January, made it still worse. The Girondins were incapable of taking the practical measures demanded by the situation: the taxation of property; the imposition of new taxes; the institution of patriotic loans. They never demonstrated more clearly the extent to which they stood for the interests of the propertied classes and of the great bourgeoisie, whose patriotic enthusiasm stopped short, or at least hesitated, at the doors of their strong rooms. They increased the issue of paper money. A detestable method, for apart from the fact that this inflation automatically involved a fall in the assignat, it speedily had its usual effect: a rise in the cost of living. Food-stuffs of prime necessity were hidden away to become subjects of a clandestine speculation which made them still dearer. It became hard to provide food for the people, and disturbances, more or less grave, were the natural result. The Girondins would hear no word of coercion or taxation; they clung to free competition and insisted on seeing nothing in the crisis but the malfeasance of *agitators*. After some illusory prosecutions, speculators and financiers, business men, of whom Cambon[7] said, "*This voracious race is even worse now than under the Ancien Régime*," enjoyed total impunity. In many districts, commissioners, sent by the Convention to appease the discontented, had to give way before the exasperation of the people and fix prices for food-stuffs. On their return, the Girondins accused them of having shown favour to anarchy and to the *Agrarian Law.*

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[7] Cambon is the financier of the Convention. Born in 1756, of a family of traders in cloth, he was named a supplementary deputy of the Third Estate of Montpellier to the Constituent Assembly and, not having taken his seat, could be elected to the Legislative Assembly where he showed his financial competence. The department of Hérault sent him to the Convention.

The *Enragés*

There was, however, a rapid spread of propaganda for severe measures against forestallers and for an official tariff on necessary food-stuffs. Inaugurated by a priest, the Abbé *Jacques Roux*, and a postal commissioner, *Jean Varlet*, it included some energetic spirits who were nicknamed *les Enragés* (the Wild Men). They worked upon the opinions of the Parisian sections and attempted to reach the "patriots" of the departments. They accused the Convention, as a whole, of default in its duty to the people, but it was against the leading Girondins that they mainly directed their accusations against Roland and his friends whom they made extremely unpopular in Paris, where the Gironde had never gained a firm footing.

The treason of Dumouriez

The turn in military affairs was no less detrimental to the Girondins. They had naturally profited by the successes of Dumouriez: the retreat of the Prussians, after the battle of *Valmy* (September 20) and the occupation of Belgium, after the victory of *Jemappes* (November 6). Dumouriez, their old colleague in the ministry of March, 1792, seemed thus to have justified their belligerent policy; the conquest of Belgium had been followed by that of the left bank of the Rhine. Were they not well on the way to achieve the great object of the best politicians of the monarchy, and to give France her natural frontiers, the limits of Caesar's Gaul? Unfortunately, Dumouriez, who, while not devoid of military talents, was thus raised to a reputation above his deserts, began to think too well of himself. He was essentially and supremely an intriguer, long habituated to the equivocal combinations of the secret diplomacy of Louis XV, and still ruled by their spirit. He had joined the Revolution only in furtherance of his own interests, and in hope of compensation, due to him, as he considered, for the disappointments of his earlier career. It was not long before he attempted to exploit the high military and political position which he had obtained.

The general's projects

What exactly did he want to do? It is hard to guess; his machinations are more obvious than their aim. It seems, however, quite likely that he intended, the capture of the line of the Rhine once achieved, and his authority and renown well established, to lead his army on Paris, to dissolve the Convention and to re-establish the monarchy, possibly in favour of Louis XVII, the son of Louis XVI, still a prisoner of the Commune in Paris, with a regency which could refuse nothing to his own ambition; possibly in favour of the Duke of Orléans, whose son (the former Duke of Chartres and the future Louis-Philippe, King of the French) was then serving under his command.

Their failure

He failed in his plan for the conquest of Holland and found himself under the irksome control of Pache, Minister of War. Despairing, then, of unaided success in the execution of his plan, he embarked upon secret negotiations with the Austrians, allowed or caused himself to be beaten at *Neerwinden* (March 18) and lost Belgium. For three months the clear-sighted among the Mountain had lost all faith in him, but the Girondins and Danton still gave him support. The last named succeeded even in postponing for a fortnight the stern measures which the arrogant attitude of the general, recalling that of La Fayette, urgently demanded. On the 5th of April, Dumouriez, after arresting and handing over to the Austrians the Commissioners of the Convention and Beurnonville, the new Minister of War, who had come to demand an explanation of his conduct, realising that it was impossible for him to subvert his army, fled to the enemy camp with the monarchist officers of his entourage.

This betrayal gave a good opening to the enemies of the

Its use against the Girondins

Girondins and they took advantage of it with a vigour possibly more malicious than sincere. Danton, feeling himself justly involved, turned the storm aside by inveighing against the blindness and culpable complaisance of the traitor's former friends; Robespierre and his friends hinted at *complicity*.[8] The Girondins, too, did not hesitate to accuse the Montagnards of treason. Passion obliterated common sense on both sides, but popular opinion remained convinced that the Girondins had at the least assisted the advancement of the adventurer, and this was quite true.

The revolt in Vendée: necessity for revolutionary measures

For a month past, a formidable insurrection, caused partly by conscription for the army, and partly by the activities of refractory priests, had been raging in Vendée. Revolutionary measures appeared necessary for its suppression, and had been long called for by Robespierre, but the Girondins, anxious to keep as far as possible within the law, were averse to adopting them. The sections, the Jacobins, the Cordeliers construed this reluctance as an abnegation of the Revolution. Very dangerous feelings were germinating. The Jacobins demanded the *recall*—that is, the revocation by their constituents—of the deputies who had defended Louis XVI, and urged their affiliated societies in the departments to insist on it (circular of the 5th of April) while the Girondins pointed out the need of excluding Robespierre, Marat, Philippe-Égalité,[9] and Danton from the Assembly. The decisive engagement would have started far sooner if the Centre, feeling how the popular wind was blowing,

First popular demonstrations against the Girondins and inclining more and more towards the Mountain, had not been in such fear of the Commune of Paris.

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[8] On the 17th of May, under the title *Histoire des Brissotins,* a pamphlet by Camille Desmoulins appeared, which represented Brissot as the soul of an Anglo-Prussian committee which was undermining the Revolution with the wish of destroying France; unquestionably a despicable calumny supported by no shred of evidence, but popular passion needed no evidence—any bold affirmation was enough for it.

[9] Duke of Orléans and great-grandson of the Regent. He had joined the Revolution and voted for the death of Louis XVI in the character of deputy. His curious name was given him at his own request by the Commune of Paris, on the 15th of September, 1792, on the ground that he wished no longer to appear as a noble.

C. *The victory of the Mountain*

Girondin indiscretion

1. The Great Mission of February

The Convention had decided to facilitate the task of raising the 300,000 troops, decreed on the 24th of February, and to stimulate patriotic feeling by sending eighty-six commissioners to the departments (March 9); the Girondins deemed it a good stroke of policy to appoint these almost exclusively from the Mountain, thus getting them out of the way, at any rate for the moment; but they were in fact affording their enemies an unhoped-for opening for an offensive in the provinces. They made a second mistake. Marat, then president of the Jacobin club, had signed the circular of the 5th of April; they had long loathed him, and they issued a writ of accusation against him, thus infringing, with inconceivable imprudence, the inviolability of the Assembly (April 13). Marat, acquitted with enthusiasm by the *Revolutionary Tribunal* (instituted on the 11th of March) returned to the Chamber carried in triumph and crowned with oak leaves on the 24th of April.

2. The attack on Marat

3. The attempt of the *culottes dorées*

The popularity of *the Friend of the People*, as Marat was called, was great in the sections. The Girondins, by insisting on the imminent menace of social war and of the Agrarian Law, by inconsistently representing their opponents as "*a handful of mischief-makers*," instigated an attempt by bourgeois elements to seize control of the sections. This attempt of the *culottes dorées* (golden breeches) as Robespierre called the wealthy and aristocratic (May 8), failed before the resistance of the *sans-culottes* (unbreeched)—that is, the popular elements—who, in reprisal, laid hands on *the Committees of Surveillance*, called *Revolutionary Committees*, instituted on March 22d, which were then becoming organised; thus holding the *suspects* at their mercy.

The Gironde committed another imprudence. They attacked the Commune and the authorities of Paris. Guadet, on

4. The attack on the Commune and the *Enragés*

the 18th of May, made the following motion: "*The authorities of Paris are broken; the substitutes of the Assembly will meet at Bourges without delay, but will assume their functions only on learning that the Convention is dissolved.*" This was to say outright that the Girondins expected that the factiousness of Paris would result in the worst that could happen. The motion was not passed, but a commission of twelve members—all Girondins—was elected to take "*the measures needed for public tranquillity.*" By its orders a number of the *Enragés* were arrested with *Hébert*, member and Substitute of the Commune, and publisher of a violent and deliberately gross paper, *Le Père Duchesne;* measures were taken to break the sections which were giving trouble, and an enquiry into the activities of the Revolutionary Committees was ordered. Finally an impression was produced that a vast reactionary movement was in preparation.

The retort: the action of the *sans-culottes*

Immediately the Jacobins, the Commune, the Revolutionary Committees who had formed a centre of action known as *l'Évêché* (the Bishopric), ranged themselves against these decisions of the Commission. The Commune demanded the liberation of Hébert; Isnard, Girondin President of the Convention, in great anger let fall threatening words, violent and maladroit, which revealed the chief fear of his party: "*If by these reiterated insurrections it should come to pass that the national representation were tampered with, I declare to you, in the name of all France, that Paris would be wiped out; yes, all France would avenge any such attempt, and it would not be long before it would be possible to wonder, on the banks of the Seine, if Paris had ever existed*" (May 25). A rhodomontade sounding much the same note as the manifesto of Brunswick.

The Day of the 31st of May

And with similar effect—the sections rose in their turn and proceeded to organise insurrection; the departmental authorities joined the movement, while Robespierre encouraged it from the tribune of the Jacobins. Petitions and demonstrations followed. On the 31st of May an Insurrectional Committee, an offshoot from the *Bishopric*, was formed and established side by side with the Commune, and subordinated the latter to itself. It appointed *Hanriot*, a man it could trust, to the command of the National Guard and ordered him to march on the Convention and demand the impeachment of the Twelve, of twenty-two Girondins and of two ministers, Clavière and Lebrun (the last two Brissotins left in the Executive Council). Bread at three sous a pound (the costs to be covered by a tax upon wealth), the dismissal of all higher officers formerly of the nobility, the formation of *a revolutionary army* of sans-culottes, the establishment of arsenals for the arming of the sans-culottes, the purging of all administrations, the disarmament, arrest and condemnation of *suspects*, the right of the vote to be provisionally reserved for the sans-culottes, public relief for the relatives of defenders of the country and for the aged and infirm. . . . A complete programme, in short, candidly revealing the different desires entertained by the demonstrators. It was somewhat unwieldy for easy enforcement by a mere petition; indeed only its first articles were read to the Assembly. For the time, fundamental decisions could be avoided: the Convention abolished the Commission of Twelve, promised an enquiry into the acts and deeds of the accused denounced by the petitioners, voted forty sous a day to the sans-culottes under arms, promised a Federation by the 10th of August, and was prodigal in good words. It even went in a body to fraternize with the demonstrators; the official papers were thus able to report the proceedings as "*a kind of national festival.*"

The Day of the 2d of June

The illusion was short-lived: the sans-culottes took thought and saw that they had been duped; they retained their organisation and continued their agitation. On the 2d of June they came back in full force. Hanriot blockaded the Convention, preventing the deputies from leaving it and, under the mouths of his guns, obliged them immediately to discuss the demands of the people, just laid before them by the Insurrectional Committee, supported by the forty-eight sections and all the constituted bodies of the department of Paris. Of these the chief and most grievous was that exacting *the mutilation of the Assembly. Barère* in the name of the Committee of Public Safety requested the deputies in question to suspend themselves voluntarily; that is to say, to hand in their resignations. Isnard and a few others consented, most refused. Finally the majority, humiliated and broken, yielding to the unbending and brutal determination which made them its tool, ordered the arrest of twenty-nine Conventionals and of the two ministers, Clavière and Lebrun. Every great name of the Gironde was on the list.

Expulsion of the leaders of the Gironde

So far the only object had been to exclude the proscribed from the Convention, not to suppress them. They were not imprisoned, but merely interned in their own houses, under the guard of gendarmes who allowed them to escape if they wished; eight did so. Twelve others had fled before the arrests took place.

Consequences of the Day

This veritable coup d'état placed the Mountain in power and for the moment excluded the higher bourgeoisie from the conduct of affairs, subordinating, in fact, the Convention to the sans-culotte organisations. The Insurrectional Committee did not seek its own prolongation, as the Commune of the 10th of August had done, but the sections, the Revolutionary Committees and the clubs were still there to goad on the Assembly. *The reign of democracy is indeed beginning:* the Convention has rather followed and fallen in with than generated or directed the movement. The Girondins have fallen mainly because they had thought that a majority in the Assembly was sufficient to give them the mastery. The Mountain had overcome them from outside it.

D. *The Girondin revolt: federalism*

The proscribed members did not accept their fall; they thought resistance to the victorious Mountain the supreme interest of the country and they did not recoil even before the prospect of civil war. They were encouraged by a protest made by seventy-five of their colleagues, who took up the cudgels on their side and quitted the Convention, and also by the opposition to the coup d'état of the 2d of June which was manifested in most of the departments—only about thirty acquiesced in it. The Girondins who had left Paris proceeded straightway to arouse or organise revolt in the provinces. This is what is known as the *Federalist movement,* because it seemed to supersede the conception of the *Republic as one and indivisible,* represented by the National Assembly, by that of a National Federation, in which each department participated by its own free will.

The centres

Revolt arose in five main centres, but with collusion between them: in *Normandy* and *Brittany,* based on Caen; in *Southeast Aquitaine,* based on Bordeaux; in the *Southeast Mediterranean* centering on Marseilles and Toulon; at *Lyons;* in *Franche-Comté.* The Girondins, however, soon realised their own unwisdom; behind their adherents they soon saw Royalists appear and take their place. Where matters became really serious, as at Lyons, only retaken after a siege of two months; at Toulon, which delivered itself up to the English (August 29) and was not retaken till the 19th of December; at Marseilles, which was on the point of following the example of Toulon, it was the Royalists who were in effective control. Elsewhere, some insignificant skirmishes were sufficient to restore control to the Convention. Yet the adventure might well have put France in great peril. The Girondins, its authors, made, for the most part, miserable ends on the scaffold or by suicide.

Royalism reappears

III

Political life

One of the main arguments adduced in justification of their revolt was that the Montagnards were endeavouring to establish their own dictatorship in the Republic, that they were unduly prolonging the existence of the Convention, now merely their tool, and that they were withholding from the country a Constitution which would have put an end to their tyranny. The Montagnards had, in fact, done their best to obstruct the discussion of a plan for a Constitution already put forward by *Condorcet;* but as soon as they found themselves masters they hastened to cut it as short as possible. *Hérault de Séchelles* was chosen to present a new version on behalf of a Commission appointed to examine a report. By the 9th of June his draft was ready. He had been contented to remould the proposals of Condorcet. In eleven sittings (11th to 24th of June) the Convention discussed and adopted all its articles: 35 for the Declaration of Rights, 124, very short, for the Constitution properly so called. This hurried proceeding *adopted as a retort to the Girondin Federalism,* merely sanctioned *principles,* leaving for further discussion the task of their practical realisation.

The Constitution of 1793

An emergency measure

Its principles

These principles are those of *pure democracy;* sovereignty of the people, a single National Assembly elected by universal and direct suffrage, in the proportion of one deputy to every group of 40,000 electors, giving a total of about 650; every law subject to a *referendum,* that is to ratification by the people;[10] the executive power entrusted to a *Council* of twenty-four members chosen by this *Legislative Body* from a list drawn up by the *electors* of each department in the proportion of one candidate for each department; all functionaries elected by *electors,* nominated by the *Primary Assemblies* (one for every two hundred citizens and one for every hundred citizens over and above this initial figure); the duration of a legislature reduced to one year; the annual re-election of half the members of the Executive Council, and of all administrative or municipal bodies; the people empowered to exact at any moment a revision of the Constitution provided that this is demanded by a tenth of the Primary Assemblies in half the departments, plus one.

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[10] If within forty days one-tenth of the *Assemblées primaires* (Primary Assemblies) in half of the departments plus one has not objected, the law is considered as adopted and becomes effective.

Social aspirations

It is remarkable that hardly any provision, in this constitutional instrument, relates to those social aspirations which had energised the most active participants in the Revolution of the 2d of June. On the contrary, *property* is included among *natural and imprescriptible rights* by Article 2 of the Preliminary Declaration. It is defined by Article 16, confirmed by Article 19. Article 101 of the Constitution, moreover, headed *Concerning public contributions*, is to the effect that "*no citizen is excused from the honourable obligation of contributing to public expenses*," while the Convention had decided, on the 8th of June, as an "*immutable principle*" that "*the absolute necessaries of life for citizens should be entirely exempt from taxation*," thus exempting the bulk of the workers from the "*honourable obligation*" in question. Such general affirmations as "*The object of society is the common happiness*" (Declaration, Art. 1); "*All men are equal by nature*" (Art. 3); "*The law takes no cognisance of domesticity*" (Art. 18); "*The relief of the poor is a sacred duty*"; "*Society owes subsistence to citizens who are unfortunate*" (Art. 21) and so on, hardly counterbalance these fundamental provisions. In reality, the Mountain had wished to avoid alienating the social conservatives and democratic bourgeois by what would appear like concessions to the Agrarian Law.

Ratification by the people

The Constitution was submitted to the people for ratification by a plebiscite. About three electors out of four did not vote, a fact which shows how few were those actually interested in the question. Affirmatives in its favour were 1,714,266 and negatives 12,766 in the total number of admitted and valid votes. It was formally proclaimed on the 10th of August, Proclamation and adjournment

1793. The Convention, it seemed, had now only to retire and give place to the Legislative Body provided by the Constitution. Some members proposed this course, but Robespierre declared so definitely that nothing could save the Republic if the Convention were dissolved, that the intention was abandoned. The constitutional instrument, enclosed in a "*sacred ark*" designed by David, was deposited with religious care in a special niche behind the chair of the President of the Assembly, to remain there forever. A decree was shortly to declare (October 10) that "*its provisions were to be applicable only on the restoration of peace.*"

B. *The Revolutionary Government*

Its formation

Meanwhile, the government is *revolutionary;* that is to say that, actuated only by the need of the moment, it reposes upon institutions which are purely opportunist and abnormal, opposed to the very principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Rights, and having *no object but the public safety.* This government was not organised by any one effort or on any predetermined plan, but each of its component parts was devised as the need for it had become manifest and then fitted in with the rest. The kind of unity shown in its structure as a whole, the apparently logical continuity of its provisions are due to the unanimity of spirit and the tenacity of will, directed to one unvarying end, which, from the turning of the first sod to the completion of the structure, guided and sustained its authors.

Its aim and its spirit

Its unvarying aim is the defence of the country and of liberty, the union in action of all national forces, the evoking of all energies, the punishment of all failures, the sterilisation of all plots, the suppression of all traitors. It deals with all that is covered by the term *salut public* (public safety), which justifies disregard of the convenience, the interest, even the normal rights of individuals. The growing exaltation of patriotism, a sort of morbid obsession which intensifies real dangers by appalling figments of the imagination, the real conviction amounting to dementia that the malice of the enemies of the Revolution, based on the worst appetites of selfish humanity, and served by inexhaustible craft, may defeat every possible precaution taken against it: these are the essential elements of the state of mind which plunged men quite inexperienced, raw novices in political life, appalled by the weight of their responsibilities, and, above all, *highly emotional*, in a whirlpool of patriotic delirium and practically of excesses inconceivable in men retaining normal sobriety and nervous control. The will to surmount, at whatever cost, every obstacle in the path or to perish in the task did the rest, and will serve to explain how men, inspired by a sentimentality which to us appears mawkish expressed in language so high-flown as to cause a smile, may be moved to deeds of incredible ferocity.

Influence of action abroad upon its constitution

It is remarkable that the principal organs of this revolutionary government were all created under the shock caused by the recrudescence of the national danger. Thus the *Revolutionary Tribunal* was instituted (March 11) after three days of agony (March 8, 9, 10), during which the people of Paris, overwhelmed by bad news brought from the army of the North by Danton and announced by him, we do not now know why, with singular exaggeration, felt that the Revolution was endangered by treachery, undefined but dreadful and calling for a drastic *épuration* (purge). The decrees for the establishment of the *Committee of Public Safety* (April 6) were passed under the impression made by the treason of Dumouriez. The organisation of the police force, known as the *Revolutionary Army* (September 5-9), the terrible *law on suspects* (September 17), the *law of the maximum* (September 29-30 and October 2) which severely restricted prices for commodities of prime necessity, reflected the fears aroused by the foreign situation at the end of August (a new invasion), and the boldness of enemies at home (Toulon had just handed itself over to the English while the revolt in Vendée seemed irrepressible). These few instances might be reinforced by many others. *The Revolutionary Government was, in fact, mainly created by the foes of the Revolution, outside the country and within it.*

C. *The governmental edifice*

1. The Convention supreme

In theory, the government rests on the sovereignty of the people and in fact on the dictatorship of the Convention which is "*the depositary of all power.*" The men of that time, steeped in the theory of Montesquieu that powers must be separated, were reluctant to unite them in one set of hands, and it was only gradually that they reconciled themselves to the consequent disorder. As early as the 10th of March *Cambacérès* had proclaimed that this confusion was inevitable as, in fact, it proved to be. *The decree of the 14th Frimaire, year II* (December 4, 1793) regularised the situation by declaring the Convention the "*sole centre from which governmental power proceeds*" and by making the necessary dispositions to place under its direct control all the constituted and duly purged authorities. The *Executive Council*—the ministers—disappeared on the 1st of April, 1794, and was replaced by twelve commissions, each of twelve members, whose activities were directed by the *Committees* of the Assembly.

2. The Committees of the Assembly

Like one of our present Parliaments, the Convention appointed Committees for the examination of measures to be taken in the diverse governmental or administrative departments; such as the Committees of the Constitution, of Public Education, of Finance and others. One of them acquires particular importance; this is the *Comité de Sureté générale* (Committee of General Security) organised on the 14th of September, 1793. It is supreme in all that concerns arrest, detention, accusation of suspects. It is the real regulator of the work of the Revolutionary Tribunal. It is composed of twelve members.

3. The Committees of government

The real directive power lay with the *Comité de Salut public* (Committee of Public Safety) created on the 6th of April, *Public Safety* and *General Security*

1793, to replace the *Committee of General Defence*—established on the 1st of January of the same year—which had proved too confused and not sufficiently secret. It was composed of twelve members elected monthly by the Assembly; but from the end of July, 1793, onwards, when Robespierre entered it, its composition remained practically the same, its members being Jeanbon-Saint-André, Barère, Couthon, Hérault de Séchelles, Saint-Just, Robert Lindet, Prieur of the Marne, Robespierre, Prieur of the Côte d'Or, Carnot, Billaud-Varenne and Collot d'Herbois. As time went on they specialised; thus Robespierre, Couthon and Saint-Just occupied themselves with general affairs, with the direction to be given to the energies of all constituted bodies; they were sometimes called "*the men of the high hand*"; Jeanbon occupied himself with the navy, Carnot with war, Lindet with food supplies and so on.

The importance of the Committee of Public Safety

In principle, the Committee of Public Safety, which is not, properly speaking, one of the Committees of the Convention, but a commission formed by the latter to give unity to government action, is really *an instrument for superintendence and in no sense an executive council;* it finds itself, however, by the force of events, "*placed in the centre of execution*" as was pointed out by Carnot (April 1, 1794): all the executive agents, military and civil alike, are under its control and receive their instructions from it. It becomes, in fact, the real centre of government. Its jurisdiction, moreover, in matters of public policy, is imperfectly differentiated from that of the Committee of General Security with which it sometimes holds sittings in common.

Its domination over the Convention

The Committee of Public Safety, though a delegate of the Assembly, dominates and leads the latter. *Thibaudeau*, deputy from the Vienne, a *centriste* (member of the Centre), who has left us highly interesting *Mémoires*, shows us the Convention awaiting and following with docility "*in grave matters*" the initiative and the decisions of the Committee, doing even more than they were asked to do by Barère, its reporter, and adopting "*rather tacitly than by an overt and formal vote*" all its conclusions. Thibaudeau exaggerates the passivity of the deputies, because it suits him to make the *tyranny* of the Committee of Public Safety wholly responsible for violent measures which he had voted for himself, but in long retrospect and in cold blood, could hardly feel proud of; it is however certain that, in the difficulties which surrounded France, twelve men, resolute and well informed, were far more likely to make clear and firm decisions, than an Assembly which discusses and drifts, and that the will of the former would ultimately be imposed on the latter.

4. The *representatives on mission*

In order to act directly upon the departments and the armies, the Assembly, reviving for its own purpose the old device of Charlemagne and of St. Louis, sent out commissioners for enquiry, to whom its own authority was delegated: they were chosen from among its own members and are known as *Representatives on Mission.* They grew less important as the Committee of Public Safety grew more so and began to direct and make use of them, especially for the organisation of revolutionary government in the departments, in the early months of 1794. It then little by little curtailed such of their activities as competed with its own. During the great crisis which lasted through 1793 they rendered important services, which were some compensation for the disadvantages of decentralisation, by destroying federalism and by stimulating the national defence.

The real physiognomy of the Convention

Nor must the Convention, as it was between June, 1793, and July, 1794, be imagined as a very multitudinous or majestic Assembly, symbolising, in stately session, a consciousness of its own high worth. Its members had diminished by a hundred after the coup d'état of the 2d of June (the proscribed and the protesters) ; a third more had been gradually lost to it, by the abstention of deputies who either attended no meetings at all, or only those of special Committees. At important meetings two hundred and fifty to three hundred members would be present, occasionally three hundred and fifty to four hundred; at others, there would be no more than a hundred or even fewer. Much time is lost in receiving and hearing petitions, in dealing with demonstrations, animated by patriotic intentions, and so excusable, but sometimes highly inopportune from the viewpoint of the Convention. And, above all, it must not be forgotten that *the sovereign people* still thinks itself empowered to supervise and to direct its representatives. The public tribunes of the Convention are crowded, at every important debate, with citizens and citizenesses, none slow to say what they think. The Jacobin club duplicates, so to speak, the National Assembly. The speakers frequent it to find out how the popular wind is blowing; repeat before it the speeches they have made in the Convention; and rehearse before it motions which they think of making and see whether they meet with approval or disapproval.

5. The popular action

In reality, the Revolutionary Government receives its orders from the Convention, while the Convention receives its inspirations from the people. It is on the people that the whole structure is based; it is by the popular organisation that it is really maintained and worked. *By the people must be understood the active and organised minority*, no more, in certain communes, than a few citizens who impose their aim and impetus on the amorphous and overawed masses.

The *Popular Societies*

These popular organisations are two, which extend over all France. First there are the *Popular Societies*, generally affiliated with the Jacobin club and, incidentally, with very diverse names; they exist in most towns, and are to be met with even in numerous villages. The Popular Society is "*the vigilant sentinel*" which supervises and stimulates all officials, denounces any lack of civic zeal or calls out for some purge; it is also "*the torch*" which gives light to and guides all opinion—the Committee of Public Safety has no better assistant. Next come the *Revolutionary Committees* entrusted in every Commune "*with measures for general security and public safety*" established by the decree of March 21, 1793, consolidated by that of the 14th Frimaire; their chief task is to hunt out, keep an eye on and arrest all *suspects.* They are therefore the right hand of the Committee of General Security with which they correspond "*directly and without any intermediary*" (*Decree of the 14th Frimaire,* Sec. 2, Art. 9). Their zeal, often indiscreet, their fanaticism and sometimes their personal animosities are responsible for more than one outrage under the *Terror;* but also do much to hold the enemies of the régime in check.

The *Revolutionary Committees*

6. The *Revolutionary Army*

The Convention had decided (September 5-9, 1793), in support of the authority of the Committee of Public Safety and the activities of the Representatives on Mission, to raise a *Revolutionary Army.* It was composed of corps of citizens, paid forty sous a day, and divided between Paris and about thirty towns of the departments. It gave some uneasiness by its indiscipline and an extreme "sans-culottism," detrimental to public order. Its abolition proved necessary (on the 4th of December, 1793, in the departments; on the 27th of March, 1794, in Paris).

IV

The Terror

A. *The word*

The word *Terror* has just been used. It is often applied to the whole government of the Convention. In reality, it is difficult to define the period within which the main resort of the government was to strike terror into the hearts of foes of the Revolution by measures of pitiless severity. It was only at the end of August, 1793, at the time of the great peril from abroad, that there was any question of *putting the Terror on the order of the day.* The word itself, used on the 30th of August by a deputy named Royer, was repeated in the Convention, in the name of the Commune, by Hébert (September 5) and adopted on the same day by Barère, reporter in the name of the Committee of Public Safety. "*Let us put the Terror on the order of the day; the moment when this is done will see the disappearance of the Royalists and the moderate and the counter-revolutionary mob which now troubles you. The Royalists desire blood? Very well, they shall have that of the conspirators, such as Brissot, or Marie-Antoinette.*"

The feeling which it expressed

These words well express the cardinal sentiment controlling the organisation of the Terror, and making it, in the eyes of its authors, necessary and justifiable, but neither the sentiment nor its manifestations in action had waited for the beginning of September, 1793; the deed had anticipated the word. The men of the Revolution have individually dated the Terror from the time when they first began to feel afraid: some from the 14th of July, 1789; others from the Days of October of that same year; others from the 10th of August, 1792; others again from the 21st of January or 2d of June, 1793. It matters little; the Terror is really the complete realisation of the revolutionary government, the embodiment in institutions or at least in practice of the *revolutionary spirit of the Mountain.*

Absence of any prearranged plan and system

Thibaudeau, in some clear-cut phrases, expressed the view of a well-informed, thoughtful and reasonable man upon the real nature of this terrible crisis: "*too much weight has been given to human perversity in imputing to some persons in particular the atrocious conception of what has been called the system of the Terror. If it had been proposed at any one moment and in its full atrocity, there is no man, however barbarous we may imagine him, who would not have recoiled in horror. But nothing could be less of a system than the Terror. Its progress, in spite of its speed, was from step to step; one after another was successively taken. Men followed without knowing whither they were going. They went* *forward because they did not dare to go back and because no other way out appeared open. . . . It was the resistance from within and without of the foes of the Revolution which gradually brought the Terror into being. It was they who nursed exaggerated patriotism. It began among the upper classes in heat and violence of speech and ended among the lower classes in atrocity of deed.*" This is true. The Terror was established by a series of coercive measures, justified as essential for self-defence, as indeed they were. The régime which it imposed upon France, said Robespierre, "*is supported on the most sacred of all laws: the safety of the people; on the most irrefragable of all titles: necessity.*"

Terrorist crises

Certain events, in particular, which raised the emotions or the fears of the "patriots" to a high pitch, had a natural consequence in the aggravation and acceleration of the Terror; such, for example, was *the assassination of Marat* (July 13, 1793) by a young woman of Normandy, named *Charlotte Corday*, whom the diatribes of the Girondins against the man whom they hated beyond all others, had turned into a fanatic; such too, above all, was the *threat of invasion*, which coincided with the grave food crisis, and made the forestallers more hated than ever at the end of August, 1793. But the Terror did not actually cease being "*on the order of the day*"—that is to say, enforced as a necessity upon all "patriots" in view of the coalition of all foes of the Republic and the people—till after June, 1794, when it became certain that French arms were to be victorious in the end.

B. *The mainspring of the Terror: coercion*

This government for public safety was *legal* in the sense that it enacted the emergency measures formally passed by the Convention, but it was extremely harsh and severe on individuals, whose rights it deliberately ignored, including even those which the Constitutional *Declaration* had declared to be inviolable and sacred. Its mainspring is *coercion*. Coercion of persons, of interests, of consciences; coercion, ignoring all public liberties, supported by the threat, and unhesitating infliction of punishments severe in the extreme.

1. Individual liberty

Individual liberty is, in fact, abolished; every inhabitant of France is perpetually under the eye of the *Revolutionary Committees* and that of civicist fanatics. No person can travel, unless provided with a *certificate of civism* issued by the municipal authorities, practically a passport within the country; their dwellings are exposed, night and day, to domiciliary visits; and if anything however trifling in a man's opinions, conduct, past condition, relations or views excites the suspicion of some "patriot," he can be denounced to the *Revolutionary Committee*, can be arrested as *suspect* and incarcerated. The law of the 17th of September regularises in this respect a practice which was already in actual use. Between suspicion and accusation, between accusation and condemnation, there is commonly but a short interval and little difference.

2. Property

The Nation holds all property at its disposal; not only that of *outlaws*, confiscated under the decree of the 1st of August, 1793, but that of all citizens alike—all are subject to *requisitions*. Saint-Just and Le Bas, on mission in Alsace, *unshod* the passers-by; that is to say, requisitioned their shoes in the open street. The assignats were promoted to the dignity of a "*National Currency*" and given forced circulation. Attempts to procure metallic coinage or to raise the price of commodities in relation to the rise and fall of paper money were considered acts especially uncivic. The prices of food-stuffs and a mass of commodities in current use were fixed under a series of decrees called as a whole *the law of the Maximum*. Any attempt to sell at higher prices or to conceal commodities involved liability to severe punishment for forestalling and speculating.

3. The rights of conscience

Theoretical religious freedom

Theoretically the Revolution had always respected the principle of religious freedom. The Declaration of Rights in 1789 had consecrated this principle; that of 1793 (Art. 7) had done likewise and at the height of the Terror the decree of the

8th of December, 1793, proclaimed it afresh. The government was well aware that while the disciples of the Philosophers might have exchanged traditional beliefs for one in *natural religion*—that is to say, for an undogmatic deism or for scepticism—the people of France, with few exceptions, still clung strongly to the Catholic worship. It has been told how the Constituents had tried to establish a State Church, a Constitutional Church, and how their project, banned by the pope, had set some of the clergy against the Revolution. The Terror was in no way tender to these refractory priests whom it held responsible, not always erroneously, for the plottings and revolts which it had so often to repress. It imprisoned them, expelled them from France, brought them before the Revolutionary Tribunal, the criminal courts and even courts-martial, by which many were sent to the scaffold. To give hiding to one of them was a capital offense (decree of the 11th of April, 1794) but suspicion of priests soon spread from the refractory to the constitutional. About the 11th of August, 1792, Thomas Lindet, Bishop of Eure, already foresaw this when he wrote to his brother Robert: "*Theism and Protestantism have the closer ties with republicanism. Catholicism has always been attached to the monarchy and has, at this moment, the misfortune to be costly.*"

The Constitutional Church

The Terror against the refractory priests

The progress of religious coercion

In fact, diverse measures which date from the last period of the Legislative Assembly prove in the first place that the Revolution was little interested in its Church (the bishops are obliged to house themselves at their own expense; all objects in metal belonging to the Church and not absolutely necessary for ceremonial use are requisitioned; the wearing of ecclesiastical costume in public is prohibited; ceremonies must not be conducted on public ways; surplice fees are abolished; the marriage of priests is safeguarded against ecclesiastical censure and so on). Next came proceedings showing direct suspicion of any constitutional priests who gave it a handle by showing the least sympathy for the Girondins. "*They give as much trouble as the others,*" said Collot d'Herbois (April 24, 1793). The decree of the 20th of October decided that any one of them indicated for incivism by ten witnesses should be deported. In many districts pressure was exerted to induce them to retire from their posts and many consequently resigned (from November, 1793, onwards). Then churches began to be closed and religious worship abolished; *but these were not universal measures.* They were taken only on the initiative of various municipalities or representatives on mission who were particularly philosophist (the old Oratorian, Fouché, for instance). The Convention did not prescribe, yet it did not disapprove them and it decreed (November 6) that the Communes were free to abolish ceremonies which they did not like and to adopt others as they might see fit. For the rest their adoption was far from universal throughout France and the exercise of Catholic worship was continued without interruption during the whole of the Terror in some country districts of the Centre; elsewhere its cessation caused no serious disturbances.

Were the people in truth "*dechristianised*"?

Can it be then said that the people were "*dechristianised,*" as some fanatic disciples of reason desired? By no means, but while the "patriots" believed that the smaller the part played by the clergy could be made the better it would be for liberty and the Republic, the others bent their heads to necessity and waited for the passing of the storm. In actual fact, not long after the fall of Robespierre (July, 1794) Catholic public worship was resumed even in Paris (September).

The Separation, 1795

Strict logic would call for the separation of Church and State when the Convention ceased to concern itself with the Constitutional Church. In the beginning of 1794 neither pensions nor salaries were any longer paid to priests, and the decree of the 5th of August, 1794, proclaiming that they should rightfully be paid did no more than show clearly the weight laid on the overburdened finances by the duty assumed by the Constituent Assembly. It was mostly a question of money which decided the Convention on the proposal of Cambon, its financier, to break its ties with the Church. The decree of the 18th of September declared: "*The Republic no longer pays the expenses or the stipends of any religious body.*" This was practically the Separation, sanctioned by the decree of the 21st of February, 1795 (3 Ventôse, year III) and Article 354 of the Constitution of the year III. The measure came too late, the damage was already done; I mean that the Church on one side, the Republic and the democracy on the other, had each had time to accumulate grievances, which have been remembered and have vitiated all relations between them, to this day.

Essays with revolutionary religions

Not content with thus checking the Catholics in activities regarded as detrimental to its own ends, the Terror attempted to supplant them by others which should make religious feeling auxiliary to the Republic. This attempt led to a twofold development and embodied the two tendencies of the Philosophers: that towards atheistic rationalism after d'Holbach, and that towards sentimental deism after Rousseau. The *worship of the Goddess of Reason* corresponds to the former and that of the *Supreme Being* to the latter.

The *Culte décadaire*

Among the reforms attempted or achieved by the Convention, side by side with that of weights and measures (the decimal system) was that of the calendar adopted on the 24th of October, 1793, on a report from the mathematician, Romme.[11] It abolished the week and replaced it by a period of ten days or decade; the tenth day or decadi was to be an official day of rest. Romme had not concealed his intention of "*suppressing the Sunday.*" Thus the new division of time broke entirely with that of the Christian year. The idea then arose of placing patriotic ceremonies, commemorations of great men [12] and of momentous events at every decadi, which was equivalent to substituting for the worship of Christ that of the country.

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[11] The very expressive names given to the months were devised by the poet Fabre d'Églantine, the author of the celebrated pastoral song so greatly in the taste of the end of the eighteenth century: *Il pleut bergère*. The names of the months were as follows: *Vendémiaire, Brumaire, Frimaire* (autumn); *Nivôse, Pluviôse, Ventôse* (winter); *Germinal, Floréal, Prairial* (spring); *Messidor, Thermidor, Fructidor* (summer). The Republican year begins on the 22d of September. Year I thus extended from the 22d of September, 1792, to the 21st of September, 1793, inclusive.

The *Worship of Reason*

The organisation of the *Worship of Reason* was due to the Department and the Commune of Paris. The idea seems to have come from the town of Nevers. Its first great festival was celebrated with much pomp in the church of Notre-Dame on the 10th of November, 1793. The goddess was represented by an actress. Analogous ceremonies took place in a certain number of provincial towns. Definitely anti-Christian and even anti-religious, they were frequently accompanied by acts of irreverence, and occasionally degenerated into performances that were actually indecent, against which Robespierre protested on the 26th of November. In some places, nevertheless, the ceremonial was both grave and dignified; it was associated by the worshippers with an exaltation of Liberty and of France.

The decree of the 18th Floréal and the *Cult of the Supreme Being*

The majority of the Convention were not Catholic, but largely spiritualist and deist. Robespierre, who had set eyes on Rousseau in his infancy, and regarded this memory as a light on his path, clung to the ideas of the *Vicaire Savoyard.* It was upon a report by him that the Assembly decided, on the 18th Floréal, year II (May 7, 1794) to hold a great festival on the 20th Prairial (June 8) in honour of "*the Supreme Being and of Nature.*" It was again he who "*officiated*" at it, in his capacity as President of the Convention. He made two speeches which breathed the greatest enthusiasm. In the interval between the two he set fire to a wooden figure purporting to be the *Statue of Atheism.* This worship met with no opposition because, in the opinion of the Catholics, as was remarked by the Abbé Grégoire, it had "*been some kind of consolation to hearts which cherished hopes of an earlier return to true religion*" (to the Catholic religion, of course), and because to others it seemed an adequate answer to those kings who accused France of atheism. It is difficult to say whether those who considered it a real religion, and one able to take the place of Christianity, were very many, but some there were and Robespierre was the first. They failed to understand that a religion is not established by a decree and that a faith is not the same thing as a theatrical demonstration.

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[12] Marat, for instance, was the object of a veritable worship in the Chapel of the Convent of the Cordeliers where his heart was deposited and in the garden of the same convent at his tomb. In several provincial towns cenotaphs were consecrated to him at which funeral rites like those in Paris were celebrated.

The causes for popular resignation

The people of France as a whole, particularly those of the countryside, remained Catholic—and not only in Vendée, where the inhabitants took up arms for the preservation of their priests and their traditional worship. If for the moment they resigned themselves not to show their opinion more openly, this was a sacrifice made to their country under the constraint of circumstances, and to many certainly a most painful one.

4. The public liberties

Nor was the religious liberty, theoretically proclaimed, the only one which became practically a dead letter. The same was the case with all public liberties and with their constitutional safeguards: liberty of the press, liberty of public meeting, liberty of association. All were enjoyed by none but the sans-culottes: unanimity was achieved by the suppression of all contradiction.

5. Revolutionary justice

It is in the domain of justice that the abnormal and the tyrannical character of the government of the Terror is most clearly displayed. Undoubtedly the courts provided by the Constitution of 1791 continued to function, and, in the departments, the criminal courts had often to try "conspirators" and "traitors"; but above these was established a special court with a procedure of its own known as the *Revolutionary Tribunal.* It is an essential part of the Terrorist machine.

The Revolutionary Tribunal

Established on the 11th of March, 1793, under pressure of the Parisian sections, urged on probably by Danton, Marat and Robespierre, who were then friends, it was intended for the trial of all offences against the country and against liberty. It consisted of a public accuser and his two substitutes, of judges, at first five, afterwards increased to ten, and of a jury. With the progress of the Terror it proved unable to cope with its work, and the number of judges was increased to sixteen; the public accuser, Fouquier-Tinville, was given five substitutes and the tribunal was divided into four sections, which sat two by two in turn. The law of the 22d Prairial modified these dispositions and established three sections working simultaneously. Little by little the procedure was simplified by withdrawing from the accused all legitimate safeguards one after another. Finally the law of the 22d Prairial (June 10, 1794) suppressed what were left—the interrogatory and the hearing of witnesses before the public audience and the assistance of counsel in defence. The President could, when he thought that the moment had come for so doing, ask the jury whether the evidence was not now enough for them; that is to say, he could stop the proceedings. It was necessary to go quickly. Every day the task grew heavier and more urgent. The Revolutionary Tribunal was the right hand of the Committee of General Security.

The law of the 22d Prairial

Severity of penalties

As is natural, the government of the Terror relies mainly on the punishments whose number and severity it incessantly increases as it tries to enforce obedience to itself. Never has human life been considered of less account. Everywhere death lies in wait for the delinquent, and the alacrity with which these sentimentalists shed blood and close their hearts to compassion, even towards women and children, is a fact which utterly confounds us. They are infected with a kind of insanity which stops short at no outrage whatever. Thus Marat, dominated by a strange neurotic pity for the people whom the "traitors" desired to destroy, asked for the heads of a hundred thousand aristocrats! Carrier, at Nantes, ordered or allowed the drowning of prisoners and was able to find matter for a jest in the fate of these unfortunates, thus subjected to "*vertical deportation.*" [13] Thus Collot d'Herbois, formerly a comedian, and fond of a striking situation, after the recapture of Lyons, ordered the wholesale execution, by shooting, of the captured insurgents.

Punishments of revolts

Collective revolts were harshly suppressed. No sooner had the huge rising in Vendée been put down than certain "*infernal columns*" overran in all senses the districts where it had occurred, and left ruin behind them (spring of 1794). Lyons, Toulon, Marseilles received exemplary punishment (about 1800 executions at Lyons, 250 at Marseilles, and a few more at Toulon). For individuals, the guillotine—*the national razor*—as it was called in sinister jest by the sans-culottes. At Paris it was permanently set up on the Place de la Révolution and there pell-mell, batch after batch, the condemned of every rank and every origin mounted its steps. Marie-Antoinette (October 16, 1793); the Duke of Orléans (November 6); Madame du Barry, the last mistress of Louis XV (December 6); former Parliamentarians, Farmers-General, among them the illustrious Lavoisier (May 8, 1794); men who had started the Revolution: Bailly (November 10, 1793); Duport, Barnave (November 28); old Constituents and Feuillants: Lamourette (January 11, 1794), Le Chapelier and Thouret (April 22); the generals: Custine, Houchard, Dillon, Lückner; the deputies: first twenty Girondins (Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Bishop Fauchet, etc.), who died singing the *Marseillaise* (October 31, 1793); Madame Roland (November 8); then the Com-

The guillotine

Its victims

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[13] Carrier has been recently studied afresh by G. Martin, *Carrier et sa mission à Nantes,* 1924.

mune of Paris with Hébert and Chaumette among them (March 24, 1794), then Danton and his friends (April 5), then Robespierre and his (July 28). As Vergniaud said, the Revolution, like Saturn, devoured its own offspring. But side by side with these more illustrious names the lists of death were inscribed with a host of others: former nobles, priests, men of every rank, women, young girls, like the poor creatures who were accused of having offered *dragées* (sweetmeats) to the King of Prussia on his entry into Verdun in 1792. Thibaudeau was right: "*Every man lived under the thunderbolt.*" "*In France under the reign of Terror no man was exempt: it overhung all heads, and descended without discrimination, arbitrary and rapid as the scythe of death . . . and the people applauded alike the punishment of the executioners and that of their victims.*" Good folk, seeing the sinister tumbrils go by, were amazed that now, that so many traitors and conspirators had been removed, the schemers against their country seemed still undiscouraged. Long afterwards, Billaud-Varenne, one of the members of the Committee of Public Safety, on his death-bed in exile, wrote that he heard from "*the depth of the future the cold judgment of posterity*" reproaching him "*for having spared the blood of the aristocrats!*" Did not Saint-Just say: "*What constitutes the Republic is the total destruction of all who are opposed to it.*" It is difficult to form any accurate numerical estimate of the victims of the Terror. From the 10th of August, 1792, to the end of July, 1794, the number appears approximately to have been about twenty thousand, of whom 2627 belonged to Paris. The strokes of the executioner fell quicker and quicker in the last months before the fall of Robespierre.[14] Nor did the guillotine rest from its labours after the death of the "tyrant." It now found work to do on the necks of the Terrorists real or supposed.

Their number

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[14] At Paris: 71 in January, 73 in February, 127 in March, 257 in April, 358 in May and 122 for only the first ten days of June.

Causes of the end of the Terror

"*The aim of the constitutional government is to preserve the Republic,*" Robespierre had said, "*that of the revolutionary government is to found it; the Revolution is the war of liberty against its enemies, the Constitution is the victorious and peaceable rule of liberty.*" The "men of the high hand," Robespierre, Couthon, Saint-Just, had by degrees arrived at *a theoretical view* of the Terror: they held it a powerful means of purging the Revolution, doing away with enemies, and training the nation in republicanism and democracy. The people, on their part, accepted the frightful régime only as a means of defence for country and freedom. So when victory had consolidated the Republic and made peace possible, the Terror, having become useless, disappeared.

Conclusion

Unfortunately it had enfeebled liberty, taken away the very men who might have defended it, filled the hearts of the mass of the people with an intense desire for normal tranquillity, and put republicanism for long under a cloud. Many years must roll by, many political experiments must be made in France, before current opinion can dissociate the conception of the Republic from the memories of the appalling crisis which had founded it, in 1793, under the impulse of the Mountain.

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CHAPTER XXX

THE RETURN TO THE BOURGEOIS REPUBLIC. THE CONVENTION IN 1794 AND 1795. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE YEAR III

I

The divisions of the Mountain

A. *The men*

THE Girondins had been overthrown by the agreement between *Danton, Marat* and *Robespierre,* who went forward together arm in arm in the Days of March, 1793, and on to the 2d of June. Then victory sundered them; the difference between their temperaments was too much for their permanent concord.

Danton

Danton, sometimes hot-headed and violent, shaking audiences with his "*volcanic eloquence,*" was outwardly belied by a cast of countenance which, normally unprepossessing, became "*on the tribune ferocious.*" He was really a man of "*sensibility*" and his extravagance in speech was largely an affectation. "*His principles were incendiary, his speeches violent to the point of madness, but his temper in private life was easy, his morals were lax and his speech was cynical. He loved pleasure and held life cheap.*" In moments of leisure he was "*always free and easy and often genial*" (Thibaudeau); Madame Roland says so herself. The reality of his convictions and the quality of his honesty have, in our day, been much debated and a close scrutiny of documents and facts gives apparently results not entirely in his favour. Though to liken him to Mirabeau would be unjust, there is something equivocal about his conduct on several occasions. He was what, in these days, we should call an opportunist rather than a man of unbending principle, and he was a man who, in serving the democratic Republic, did not always ignore his own interests: his love of influence and pleasure. He rather unwisely amused himself with shock-ing Robespierre by his Rabelaisian witticisms, and worse still, had incurred his suspicion and contempt long before the final occasion when they clashed and came to grips with one another.

Marat

Marat, the scapegoat for the sins of the Terror, had died (July 13, 1793) before the greatest among them had been committed. His deliberate negligence in dress and cynical violence in speech have done at least as much harm to his name as the atrocities which can be imputed to him. That he was a fanatic and an appalling sectarian cannot be doubted, but his very excesses were undoubtedly the consequences of sincere conviction and the fruits of a sentimentalism gone astray; everywhere he saw enemies of the people. He may have thought of having himself proclaimed dictator, and he has been suspected of engineering a movement in this direction among the demonstrators of the 2d of June; but personal ambition was not his motive and his probity is unquestionable. Most of the men who came after him were by far his inferiors; and if *Chaumette*, for instance, was at bottom an honest and benevolent man turned by accident into a terrorist, *Hébert* represents that most odious type of journalist who, without convictions of his own, makes a livelihood by exciting popular passion and maintains his position by bidding higher than his rivals. Robespierre regarded Marat as a coarse fawner on the people and detested, without due discrimination, his entire following, which crowded the Commune, as likely to jeopardise the Revolution.

Robespierre

Robespierre well deserved the name of the *Incorruptible* given him by his devotees; there is no evidence which justifies us in describing it as undeserved, or himself as not wholly sincere in the principles which he consistently professed, or as making any concession whatever to aims either mean or material. After his fall his enemies drew an odious picture of him. It suited them to represent him as responsible for the Terror, and their calumnies have largely contributed, in common opinion, to make his name execrated. This is an injustice. It has been alleged that he planned the removal of all who might obstruct his ambition in order to secure his own tyrannical domination over a crippled Revolution. There is no proof whatever that he had any such dark design. Robespierre appears to us as a man to whom principles were everything, a rigid doctrinaire, quite pitiless, an inflexible and inexorable apostle of civic virtue, as remote as could well be from vulgar self-seeking. He was quite devoid of all that may be called charm, the gift of evoking personal sympathy; but he could arouse enthusiasm and fanaticism in the very men who seemed least likely to be captivated either by his speech, which was always restrained, or his manners, which were always reserved, or his very precise and "ci-devant" dress, or his unimpressive and somewhat puny physique. His cold-blooded exaltation never clouded his good sense or right judgment, and if he had been as gifted for execution as for conception he might have won that last throw which he lost, as much owing to his respect for law as owing to indecision in face of the unforeseen. Neither Danton nor Marat, nor the men of the Commune of the 10th of August had any love for him. They feared both his insight and his influence with the people.

B. *Formation of adverse groups*

Thus the apparent unity of the Mountain concealed personal incompatibilities and disagreements, though these did not come to light till the middle of 1793. As time went on they only grew greater, nourished by reciprocal grievances which accentuated them. In this way, three groups were formed, whose coherence, solidity, complete segregation must, however, not be exaggerated, known as the *Dantonists*, the *Hébertists* and the *Robespierrists.*

Dantonists

Of these three groups the least solid, the least real, was undoubtedly the first named. It was composed of *business deputies;* that is to say, of men who profited by their position to speculate, gamble in stocks and shares and enrich themselves, of men of inordinate and disappointed ambition, who were connected by more than one secret tie not only with the vanquished Gironde but also with clandestine *monarchiens* and reactionaries. Around these revolved various *men of business* of somewhat equivocal character. Of these the most openly active, as believing themselves comparatively immune from attack, were foreigners, a Spaniard (*Guzman*), Englishmen (*Boyd* and *Kerr*), a Dutchman (*De Kock*), a Dane (*Diedrichsen*), Austrians (the two brothers *Schoenfeld,* who were Jews), a Portuguese (*Pereyra*), while the strangest character among them appears to have been one *Jean de Batz,* a Frenchman, a Royalist conspirator, who, under cover of a false certificate of identity, intrigued and wormed his way into affairs, bought and made profits with the collaboration, more or less witting, of deputies like Basire, Chabot, Julien de Toulouse and others. These folk were in touch with international finance and many appear not to have refused their assistance to foreign political agents. The promiscuous intercourse of the Dantonists with these men could not fail to be compromising to the former.

Hébertists

The Hébertists habitually met not in the Convention but mainly in the Commune, the Department, the society which the Cordeliers frequented under the invocation of Marat; *Pache,* Mayor of Paris, *Chaumette,* Procureur of the Commune, and *Hébert,* his Substitute, General *Hanriot,* were the best known. The *Père Duchesne,* very violent and very gross, was their paper. They succeeded in entering into close relations with the bureaux of the Executive Council, particularly those of the War and of the Assembly, and they could count on the sympathy of Billaud-Varenne and Collot d'Herbois. They are, as a whole, the most mischievous of the sans-culottes, brawlers, outrageously militarist, demagogues always ready to stir up trouble, to incite the people to violence, to go any lengths in terrorism, and to boot, with some honourable exceptions, often of doubtful sincerity. They are in relations, too, with the gang of business adventurers and are not incapable, with some personal exceptions, of profiting thereby; the sharpers of gutter politics soon ruin the reputation of those who are merely enthusiastic and sincerely convinced sectarians.

Robespierrists

The Robespierrists certainly comprise the most uniformly honest and upright elements of the Mountain, and those most successful in eschewing detrimental entanglements: *Couthon, Saint-Just*, *Le Bas.* They thus form the most compact group about the *Incorruptible*, and their principal strength resides in the Jacobin club where they reign supreme. They are indeed not devoid of revolutionary fanaticism and the most terrible aphorisms enunciated from the tribune of the Convention, as from that of the Jacobins, fell from the lips of Saint-Just, rather than from those of Robespierre himself. But they have at least clearly grasped the empirical and provisional nature of the Terror, and they decided to carry it to such lengths only because they considered it necessary; they wished it to be *pure*—that is to say, unsullied by any selfish and sordid chicane, *sincere* and *impartial.* They looked forward to the day when a just Constitution, its enemies exterminated, should reign over a peaceful and stable Republic.

C. *The cause of the great conflict: the terminating of the Terror*

It was ostensibly upon this very question—the limit to be set to the Terror—that issue was joined between Robespierre and Danton, but in reality the conflict turned on Robespierre's intention *to purify the Revolution*, which obtained more and more ascendancy over his mind, to the point of becoming a fixed idea, in proportion as he became assured that the Republic was drawing nearer and nearer to normality and consummation.

The campaign of Desmoulins for clemency

Ever since October, 1793, the Committees of Public Safety and of General Security had been receiving denunciations of speculation by deputies; the most coming from Fabre d'Églantine, a friend of Danton, whose zeal in the cause was a cloak for his own speculations in the liquidation, then proceeding, of the Company of the Indies. Others came from Chabot, who was no more trustworthy. The Committees proceeded to a series of arrests, which came near to including some of Danton's familiars (November 17). Soon after (December 5) Camille Desmoulins issued a newspaper, *Le Vieux Cordelier*, with the object of undermining the Committees by taking advantage of the growing movement which extended to the Convention itself for a relaxation of Terrorist measures, the great fears of the end of August having now been dispelled.[1] In the third number of his paper he compared the government of France to a tyranny of the worst type; in the fourth number (December 25) he demanded the institution of a *Committee of Clemency* and the liberation of suspects. He attacked Collot, Barère, Hébert, some of the familiars of Robespierre and soon Robespierre himself. The latter did not take Desmoulins very seriously but thought Danton was behind him; Danton's *moderatism*, moreover, seemed to him to have reached a point where it might check the *purge* undertaken by the Committees, and shelter the speculators. He was possibly quite right. The extreme Hébertist terrorists, under cover of the Cordeliers, started, without delay, a campaign against Desmoulins and the Dantonists. Robespierre was far from wedded to his alliance with the Hébertists, whose "*ultra-revolutionary measures*" he considered as dangerous in their way as the "*infra-revolutionary means of the latter.*" He characterised them as "*factions . . . directed by the foreign party*" and regarded the Republic as doomed to destruction if subjected to "*either system*" (speech of the 8th of January to the Jacobins). Under his inspiration, the Committees openly assumed an attitude antagonistic to both. The report which he presented to the Convention on the 5th of February removed all doubt as to what was coming. Desmoulins and Danton, who

D. *Policy of Robespierre*

He takes a position between the two *factions* and against both foresaw the event, would have liked to draw back and the former proceeded to utter his recantation in the *Vieux Cordelier.* He was too late; action was taken upon the resolution of the Committees. The populace, upon whose support the Hébertists had counted, did not move. On the 14th and 15th of March their leaders were arrested, helter-skelter, with a few men of business (Pereyra, De Kock, and others), as "*agents of the foreigner,*" on the strength of a damning report by Saint-Just, and on the 24th of March, after a rapid trial, twenty-one were sent to the scaffold.

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[1] The great Vendean army was destroyed at Savenay on the 23d of December, and the recapture of Landau, on the 26th of December, set Alsace free.

The end of the Hébertists (March 24)

The struggle with the Dantonists

Saint-Just had said, speaking of the two *factions*, that of the *foreigner* and that of the *indulgent*, that they met in the night to concoct their plans for the day. "*They pretended to be fighting with one another in order that opinion might be divided between them. They thus united themselves in order to stifle liberty between two crimes.*" This brought the Dantonists under the same condemnation as the Hébertists. It seems, however, that Robespierre hesitated to sacrifice Danton and Desmoulins (he still had an affection for the latter) or such men as Philippeaux whose honesty was beyond dispute. Danton might have been able to profit by this hesitation, over which Billaud, Collot and Saint-Just triumphed, either to persevere in the struggle or to find shelter, for instance, abroad; but by that time he was depressed and discouraged. Perhaps he believed, as he is said to have exclaimed, that Robespierre "*would not dare*" and his patriotism, whose sincerity cannot seriously be contested, made exile abhorrent to him. "*One does not carry,*" he said, "*one's country on the soles of one's shoes.*"

Arrest of Danton and his friends

On a new report by Saint-Just, which accused them "*of having dabbled in conspiracy tending to re-establish the monarchy, to destroy the National representation and the Republican Government,*" Danton, Delacroix, Philippeaux, Desmoulins were impeached (March 31) and handed over to the Revolutionary Tribunal in company with Fabre l'Églantine, Chabot, Basire, other well-known *profiteers* and those who remained of the *men of business* (Diedrichsen, Guzman, the two Schoenfelds and others). The accused made a vigorous defence. Danton once more raised his formidable voice, potent as ever over the passions of his hearers. But, as one of the jurymen said: "*This is not a trial, it is a measure*"; the court decided not to hear the evidence for the defence and sentence of death was pronounced: it was carried out on the same day (April 5). A supplementary batch (April 17) comprised and united in death several notable survivors of both factions: Chaumette, the widows of Hébert and Desmoulins with Gobel and others. The Commune thus destroyed was replaced by a Robespierrist successor; the Cordeliers were *purged*. After the 9th of September the permanence of the sections was abolished. A few local clubs organised by the Hébertists to take their place disappeared (May-June); *the victory of the Committees was complete.*

Their execution (April 5)

II

Robespierre

A. His alleged attempt at dictatorship

This victory is too often confused with that of Robespierre and the name of *the dictatorship of Robespierre* is given to the period of three months which intervenes between Danton's execution and his own. We have here a double exaggeration. The *Incorruptible* could pose as *victor* because his doctrine had triumphed, and as *master* because the people trusted him completely; because his influence was supreme over the Jacobins, while in the Assembly he wielded a moral authority which, though largely founded upon fear, was undoubtedly a fact. His domination over the Committees was far less assured. Among them he counted some devoted friends (Couthon, Saint-Just, Le Bas), but also some who envied and opposed him (Carnot, Billaud, Collot and above all some members of the Committee of General Security), who considered him over-authoritative and too popular not to be dangerous. Among these he was already known as the *Tyrant* or the *Pontiff*. At the festival of the Supreme Being, insults reached his ear uttered behind his back by deputies and members of the Committees. A double danger threatened him. The *Moderantistes* (Moderates), to whom the Terror was repugnant, after having helped to establish and sustain it, now began to hold him accountable for it as the best way to exonerate themselves. The idea occurred to them that to do away with him would be to make an end of a régime of which they felt ashamed now that it was no longer necessary.

The intentions of Robespierre

On the other hand, the extremists feared him; the *purge*, he thought, was incomplete. He saw the hour of peace with Europe rapidly drawing near; he felt that it would be retarded by the repugnance inspired in foreigners by the ferocious Terrorists still surviving in the Committees (*Collot*, the organiser of the massacres of Lyons), and in the Convention (*Tallien*, who was called "*the pro-consul of Bordeaux*," *Fouché*, whose mission to Nevers had in some manner inaugurated public atheism, *Carrier*, who was responsible for the drownings of Nantes, and others). He thought it advisable to eradicate from the Republic characters so likely to cast a slur on it.

His tactical mistakes

He lacked decision. It was indeed a formidable undertaking to stand up to the two Committees with only the minority of the *pure* on his side; but he was in a position to obtain help from the people of Paris: Hanriot, who commanded the National Guard, was entirely on his side; he had the ear of the Convention, in which the Centre—that is to say, the majority—was restive under the dictatorship of the Committees and would undoubtedly help him to break it. But he committed a fatal mistake in making known his intention of *purging*, of supporting it by general and indeterminate threats and by not immediately carrying them out. He ceased, for several weeks, to appear either at the Committee of Public Safety or at the Convention; he was preparing a great speech for the utter confounding of his foes with the fatal confidence of the advocate who is prone to think words as potent as deeds! Those whom he threatened were all prompt to make good use of their time; fear gave them courage to act in concert. They circulated *proscription lists* which purported to reveal the names of those whose heads the tyrant was about to demand and they thus interested in their cause many deputies to whom Robespierre had never given a thought.

B. *His fall*

The 9th Thermidor

When the speech was ready he proceeded to deliver it to the Assembly, which heard it in silence but definitely refused to authorise its printing (8th Thermidor, July 26). He persisted in the mistaken course of holding the most terrible threats over the heads of the Assembly and the Committees without coming to any conclusion, without giving names, without directly demanding arrests which the Assembly could probably not have refused him. It would not be enough, he said, to purge the Convention, the government must be purged too, as well as the Committee of General Security and the Committee of Public Safety itself. During the night his enemies plucked up courage for action and next day Billaud-Varenne led the attack. This was a furious assault on Robespierre. An appalling and systematic uproar rendered his reply inaudible and his defence ineffective. The Centre merely looked on; but when one obscure deputy, named Louchet, had demanded the arrest and another the accusation of the *Tyrant*, the Centre voted for both. With Robespierre were joined his brother, Le Bas, Couthon, Saint-Just, Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, Hanriot, with all his staff. The Commune made a vigorous resistance: it called the National Guard to arms, set the accused free and conducted them to the Hôtel de Ville; but Robespierre, wedded as ever to legality, respecting even the Convention which was attacking him, refused to take the one course which could have saved him: to issue a proclamation to the people and raise them against the Assembly. To the solicitations of his friends who pressed him to sign the paper that they had prepared he obstinately answered: "*In the name of whom? In the name of what?*" The National Guard, which at first had responded to the appeal of the Commune, twenty-three sections out of forty-eight, waited for orders; they did not come, and it dispersed. A small band of armed men, devoted to the Convention, was able to gain access and effect a sudden entry into the hall where the doubtful were debating. There was a scuffle with horrible accompaniments: the younger Robespierre threw himself out of the window; Le Bas killed himself; the *Tyrant* possibly attempted to follow his example, at any rate his jaw was fractured. A gendarme, named Meda, boasted that he had shot him with a pistol. The actual facts have never been elucidated.

Execution of the Robespierrists (July 28)

The next day, after a simple interrogation to establish identity, on the ground that they were outlaws, Robespierre and twenty of his friends or notorious partisans were executed. A batch of seventy on the 11th Thermidor and a further one of thirteen, finally consummated, in a horrible butchery, the elimination of his *faction*. "*The Tyrant is no more. Robespierre has died the death of traitors; his accomplices have gone with him and liberty triumphs. Country, Probity, Virtue, your sacred names shall no more be soiled by lips impure; your reign shall bring back to Frenchmen confidence, fraternity and happiness. The oppression is over. Patriots, breathe again; imitate your representatives, resume an attitude fit for republicans.*" It is in these terms that Thibaudeau, in an *Adresse à ses concitoyens* (Address to his fellow-citizens), that is to say to his constituents, as soon as the 10th Therimdor precluded the horrors of the reaction. The cowardice and blind rancour of the Centre had given victory to a miscellaneous crew which combined the most despicable elements of the Terrorist Mountain with its wildest sectarians. The dignity and the courage of Robespierre in face of this rabble do him honour and deserve

The view of the Centrist majority

respect. For the rest, the sentiments, expressed by Thibaudeau, a future *préfet* of Napoleon, are those which the victors asserted, which perhaps they felt, and by which, in any case, they justified their atrocity.

III

The Thermidorian reaction

A. Preponderance of the Centre; its feeling towards the Thermidorians

The *Thermidorian Revolution,* as the fall of Robespierre may be called, oriented the Convention in a new direction by giving preponderance to the Centre, which assumed an attitude of superiority now there was no longer danger in doing so. Continued concord between the victors over Robespierre and the new majority was naturally impossible. The survivors of the Mountain were no longer in a position to act as arbiters. The tyranny of the Committees born of the Terror was no less insupportable to the *Centrists* without the *Tyrant* than with him; Centrist animosity against the apologists of the Terror and its tools did not disappear with the disappearance of the man upon whom they vainly attempted to throw all the responsibility. By natural inclination those Centrists had leanings towards the *Moderantistes,* the Girondins, even the Feuillants and the Monarchists, who, laid prostrate before the Revolutionary Government, now began little by little and one after the other to recover their courage.

The movement of the Convention to the Right

For this reason, the last period of the Convention brings us in contact with a reaction which draws the Assembly more and more to the Right to the detriment at first of the Terrorists and later to that of the Montagnards, later still to that of the Jacobins and the Democrats, and which will ultimately bring it into a state of mind much like that of the Legislative Assembly at its beginning or even that of the Constituent Assembly at its end. This is expressed in the political testament of the Convention: the *Constitution of the year III* which was substituted, in spite of Jacobin protests, for the Democratic *Consti-*

tution of the year I. It is possible that had a sympathetic candidate been forthcoming royalty might have been forthwith re-established, and the Assembly came near to ending in a riot in favour of some such restoration.

The attack on the Committees of government

The Thermidorians of the worst stamp—Fréron, Tallien, Fouché, who desired to make their compromising past forgotten and to earn indulgence from the Centrist majority—led the attack against the Committees, and the *Crêtois* (Cresters); that is to say, the Montagnards who had remained faithful to the Jacobin ideal, and held the *Crest* of the Mountain. They had no difficulty in obtaining the abolition of the law of the 22d Prairial, the formal accusation of Fouquier-Tinville,[2] the purging of the Revolutionary Tribunal and the reconstitution of the Committees. The Thermidorians then furiously attacked the old members of the Committees. The Convention at first resisted: somewhat ashamed, now that it was making such a point of the assertion that the Terror was over, to sacrifice deputies against whom it could allege nothing but the exaltation of their revolutionary passion and to surrender to men whom it despised. It was still impressed with the wisdom of Cambon's saying: "*If the Committees are criminal, criminal also must be the Assembly which has prolonged their powers month by month and unanimously.*" It has been hard hit, too, by the retort of one of its members to Tallien: "*He who is declaiming against the system today, yesterday was declaring its utility.*" But the Thermidorial pressure was gradually reinforced from other sources.

Hesitations of the Assembly

B. *The pressures applied to it*

1. The *Muscadins*

The first was that of the bourgeois youth, the *Muscadins* (the young sparks), often *embusqués* as we say familiarly today; that is to say, young men of full age who had managed to escape military service. Now that the "patriots" are no longer the masters and sans-culottism is out of fashion, they grow bold, go in insolent and aggressive gangs and mishandle Jacobins caught alone. Their audacity and their strength are augmented as, by the natural reaction which commonly follows times of restriction, when men seek enjoyment in life, habits of refinement and luxury are resumed and the well-to-do again take the crown of the causeway. They affect a distinction of manner and a nicety of dress, in strong contrast with the free-and-easiness of the sans-culottes. Their incessant demonstrations encourage reactionaries of every origin and bear hard on the Assembly which dares not send them to the army where most of them ought to be.

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[2] This man was in no respect a monster drunk with blood, but a worthy official who did his work with great regularity and a good conscience. Yet it was this work, nevertheless, which incurred such odium as to bring him to the scaffold.

2. The new press

In the second place, newspapers are established, which aid and abet the Muscadins, ridicule Jacobins, declaim against Terrorists and reduce the Democratic organs to silence or, at any rate, to practical impotence. The great journals of the time, like the *Moniteur* and the *Débats*, see how the wind blows and set their course towards the Right. All express sentiments of reprobation and abomination for the Terror.

3. The Girondins return

Next, by a decree of the 8th of December, the Convention recalls the deputies who protested against the coup d'état of the 2d of June, 1793. These are still sixty-four. Soon (March 8) it is to authorise the return of the surviving Girondins formerly outlawed: Isnard, Lanjuinais, Louvet and others. After some vacillations, there will be a welcome even for Delahaye, a convert to royalism! All are overflowing with bitter resentment and inexpiable hatred for their former proscribers. The *suppléants* (supplementary members) summoned by the Assembly to fill the gaps in its ranks, in number about forty, came on the scene steeped through and through with the ideas of the day. Thus the majority gradually shifted and became favourable to more and more stringent measures of severity against the institutions and men of the heroic period.

On the 12th of November, under the pretext that its hall

C. Decisive measures against the Jacobins and the Committees

of meeting was the centre of various disturbances, the Jacobin club was closed; this was a mortal blow to the "patriots": they lost their best means of defence and of action. Prosecutions had already begun and the Terrorists most deeply involved: first Carrier (November 21), then Barère, Billaud-Varenne, Collot, Vadier, were arrested on the 27th of December, and brought to trial on the 2d of March, 1795; Carnot only escaping the same fate because, when his case was brought forward, a deputy shouted: "*But he organised the victory.*"

Destruction of the Revolutionary Government

Piece by piece the revolutionary government was destroyed: the two Committees, a quarter of whose members were changed every month, were obliged to join up with the Committee of Legislation for the general direction of affairs (August 24, 1794); the departmental administrations recovered their powers (April 17, 1795); the *law of the maximum*, with the perquisitions, requisitions, and so forth, was abolished (December 24, 1794 and January 2, 1795).

The popular resistance

This breaking down of all that the "patriots" had thought it necessary to build up might have been effected without many difficulties if it had not coincided with a grave food crisis, consequent upon the rapid fall in the value of assignats and the unbridled speculation encouraged by the disappearance of the deterrents against it. Distress did far more to inflame the people than all the exploits of the Muscadins or all the triumphs of political reaction. The sections came back to life and again were a menace. Finally they brought about two *Days*, the *12th Germinal*, year III (April 1, 1795) and the *1st Prairial* (May 20). During the former they invaded, women and children among them, the hall of the Assembly, demanding "*bread and the Constitution of 1793.*" There was nothing more behind it, but the majority affected to be as acutely anxious as though they were faced by a Jacobin plot, and without leaving their seats, ordained the deportation without trial of the members of the Committees who had been ac-

The Day of the 12th Germinal

cused on the 2d of March and the arrest of eight other deputies followed by eight more on the 5th of April. These were not terrorists but republican Montagnards and democrats, many of whom had been, even at the height of the Terror, opposed to its excesses. The Girondins were taking their revenge. The Day of the 1st Prairial was more serious. The hall of session was invaded afresh and one deputy, Féraud, who, it seems, was taken by the rioters for Fréron, a hated Thermidorian, was murdered on the threshold. The Right and the Centre left the house and the eighty Montagnards who remained voted to reconstitute the Committees, make the sections permanent, set at liberty the incarcerated "patriots," and arrest the royalist journalists; they also passed some measures relating to food supplies. This time the Centrists had been really frightened. When the insurgents, thinking the day to be theirs, had dispersed, the majority returned, annulled the measures just passed and decreed the arrest of six deputies of the Mountain, among them Prieur (of the Marne). They then collected their forces, called troops they could trust to the spot and soon quelled, with their aid, the frenzied faubourgs; arms were confiscated and from eight to ten thousand arrests made. The National Guard was reorganised and by a decision that it must equip itself at its own expense men of the people found themselves excluded from its ranks. They were compulsorily debarred from service to the benefit of the bourgeoisie by a decree (May 29). Two days later the Revolutionary Tribunal was abolished and with it the courts-martial and the right of the criminal courts to try cases by revolutionary procedure. After this liquidation, none of the emergency tribunals remained except the court-martial for the trial of the culprits of Prairial by which the six arrested deputies were sentenced to death; they all committed suicide in prison, and are known as the *last Montagnards* [3]; with them disappeared from

The Day of the 1st Prairial

Their repression

The *last Montagnards*

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[3] Their names: Duquesnoy, Goujon, Romme, Bouchotte, Duroy, Soubrany.

the Convention the great party which had presided over the Revolution during its most critical period.

The *White Terror* in the departments

At Paris, the repression was relatively lenient, but it encouraged the reactionaries in the departments, who held all things justifiable against the sans-culottes who had so long kept them in dread. After the 10th Thermidor, the Revolutionary Government, by mere force of momentum, had continued to function unchanged; next, Representatives on Mission had joined and subjected it to the same reductions as in Paris. In consequence, reactionary measures against the masters of yesterday were taken in some districts, in the Centre and the East.

In September, 1794, they began to be thrown into prison at Lyons where the Jacobin club was closed. After the decisions taken by the Convention in April and May, 1795, acts of violence multiplied. At Lyons an organised gang, calling itself the *Companions of Jesus*, massacred eighty-six "patriots" in the prisons (May 5). This precious example was shortly followed in districts which had remained royalist: Montelimart, Sisteron, Avignon, Tarascon, Nîmes, Marseilles, Aix, Toulon. Abominations are committed which equal or surpass in horror the famous massacres of September. They form the first *White Terror* for which there is no reason but revenge and people's desire to prove to themselves that they are no longer in fear. Its motives are far from magnanimous; the Red Terror, for all its barbarity, was of a very different stamp.

IV

The Constitution of the year III

At the same time, peace was progressively re-established both abroad and at home. Prussia signed the treaty of Basel (April 5, 1795) and Spain soon followed her example (July 22). Holland concluded an alliance with the Republic (May 16). A series of decrees (from the 14th of March to the 9th of May) confirmed the pacification of Vendée. The religious crisis was solved by the separation of Church and State and the effective establishment of freedom of worship. The Convention had no further reason to prolong its tenure of power and could at last seriously attend to the task of giving a Constitution to France. It was determined not to recognise the Constitution of 1793, characterised as "*the organisation of anarchy*" by the commission appointed to examine it, and composed entirely of Girondins, notably Daunou, the principal author of the final draft—and of bourgeois Centrists, resolutely hostile to democracy except for one member, Berlier. Nor is there any reason to be surprised that the Constitution of the year III, adopted on the 5th Fructidor (August 22), should have embodied the view expressed by Boissy d'Anglas, the reporter for the Commission of Examination in the words: "*A country governed by the owners of property is within the social order,*" though parts of the new organisation were democratic in outward appearance, after the example set by the Constitution of 1791.

The Constitution of the year I abolished Spirit of the new Constitution

The *principles of 1789* were confirmed "*in the presence of the Supreme Being*" by a new *Declaration of Rights* in twenty-two articles which altogether dropped the timid pseudo-socialistic additions of the Declaration of 1793. It was accompanied by a *Declaration of Duties* in nine articles, defining the moral and civic obligations of the "*good citizen*" and of the "*righteous man*" with a stress laid (Arts. 8 and 9) on the necessity of "*upholding property,*" which is the sign-manual of the authors of the act. The Constitution, properly so called, rests on *the principle of universal suffrage* and on that of the *separation of powers*. But to be a citizen it is necessary, apart from the qualification by age (twenty-one years) and by residence (a year in the territory of the Republic) and the formality of enrollment in the civic register of the canton, to pay "*a direct contribution on property or person*" (Art. 8) and

A. *The* Declaration of Rights and Duties

The right to a vote

"*young people cannot be placed on the civic register unless they prove that they can read and write and practise a manual trade*" (Art. 15 to take effect first in the year XII). These conditions, exclusive of the last, reduce the electorate by quite one-sixth.

The electoral bodies

Furthermore, the *Primary Assemblies* which are "*composed of citizens domiciled in the same canton*" (Art. 17) have a restricted competence; they elect the minor officials of the commune and of the canton, while the *electors* who form the *Electoral Assemblies*—one for each department—elect the members of the Legislative Body and all the higher departmental officials. But these *electors* themselves can be chosen only from among property owners or lessees or farmers who must be *extremely well-to-do* with an income which varies from one hundred to two hundred labour days, by local valuation, according to the population of their commune (Art. 35) and at least twenty-five years of age.

B. *The three powers*

1. The legislative

The legislative power is entrusted to a *Legislative Body* "*composed of a Council of Elders and a Council of Five Hundred*" (Art. 44). In both one-third retires yearly. Laws can be initiated only by the Five Hundred; the Elders can only approve or reject their proposals. All receive a parliamentary salary, and are subject to no property qualification; they can thus in theory be chosen from the people, but it seldom occurs that bourgeois electors will seek representatives among workmen or peasants.

2. The executive

"*The executive power is delegated to a Directory of five members nominated by the Legislative Body, acting thus as an Electoral Assembly in the name of the Nation*" (Art. 132). One-fifth of its members retire yearly. They are chosen from "*among citizens who have been either members of the Legislative Body or ministers*" (Art. 135). This Directory is a collective head of the State. It nominates the *ministers* whose duties and number are determined by the Legislative Body

(Art. 150) and who "*do not form in any respect a council*" (Art. 151).

3. The judicia

The judiciary power, strictly separated from the other two and entrusted to elected judges, assisted "*in cases of misdemeanours involving corporal or ignominious punishments*" by two juries, one which finds a true bill against the accused, or the reverse, and one which pronounces upon his guilt. (Art. 237 seq.)

A series of organic laws regulates the working of this Constitution. In garniture and outward guise it is *democratic*, in intention and in fact it is *bourgeois* and anticipates the ideal of the bourgeoisie under Louis-Philippe, which sees in the progressive elevation of the people the only means of giving them an effective share in the government: *get wealth, get learning*, if you wish to be of account in public life.

C. *The anxieties of th Convention as to the working of the Constitution*

The country was not yet so quiet as to make the practical application of the new Constitution an easy task. An attempt of the emigrants, supported by the English, had just failed at Quiberon (July 22), but Charette, the Vendean leader, had again taken up arms (August 2) and everywhere the Royalists were enheartened: Paris was full of returned emigrants and of insurgents of the West. They plotted and intrigued in the cause of the king and already more than one deputy—Tallien, for instance—lent them a favourable ear. In the South, in Normandy and in Brittany, a dangerous agitation, definitely anti-republican, gave them courage. The Assembly could not possibly shut its eyes to this peril, though the majority, in its "anti-sans-culottist" obsession, still attached more importance to Jacobin discontent. It hesitated to hand over its work to new men, whose sentiments and intentions were hard to foresee, and it was not so blind as not to realise how profoundly unpopular it had become: the parties of the Right could not forgive it for its acquiescence in the Terror or those of the Left for its engineering of the Thermidorian reaction. Knowing that the

The decision as to the *two-thirds* of the Assemblies to be elected

Elections would go against it, it decided that two-thirds of the Legislative Body should automatically be composed of members of the Convention. The plebiscite, ill-organised, confused and irregularly applied, approved the decision, together with the Constitution in the month of September; a sanction not greatly to be relied upon, since barely a million electors had taken the trouble to vote.

The royalist attempt of the 13th Vendémiaire (October 5)

The royalist agitators in Paris, who looked to a *good election* to turn the tides of reaction in their favour, took *the decision of the two-thirds* extremely ill, and succeeded in raising the bourgeois sections of the centre of the town against the Convention. On the 13th Vendémiaire (October 5) they attacked the Convention which was only too glad hastily to arm 1800 "patriot" volunteers in its defence.[4] It appealed to the army, which in a sanguinary fight made a clean sweep of the riot. A young general named *Bonaparte* distinguished himself in this operation. In other respects the repression was lenient (two death sentences in all); but the revolting sections were disarmed. The domination of the army had begun. Some precautions, too, against royalism were taken by a commission of which Tallien—prompt to turn his coat—was the zealous reporter.

The end of the Convention

On the 26th of October, 1795 (4th Brumaire, year IV), the Convention held its last sitting. It proclaimed a general amnesty, exception being made of deported priests, emigrants, forgers of false assignats and insurgents of Vendémiaire; decided that the death penalty should be abolished dating from the reestablishment of peace, and finally with intentions very clearly symbolical and deliberately optimistic, decreed that the *Place de la Révolution* should henceforth be called the *Place de la Concorde*, the name which it still bears. After which Genissieu, the President, pronounced the closing formula:

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[4] They were called *"the patriots of 1789."* This nickname is full of implications and meaning.

"The Convention declares that its task is done and that its session terminates."

Conclusion

The work of the Convention

This was the end. The results of the three terrible years, whose conclusion is marked by this brief sentence, will be very differently estimated according to the standpoint of the observer.

From the political standpoint they cannot be regarded as excellent, either in the present or for the future. They culminate in a definite step backwards from democracy and a return to the spirit of privilege. They leave the very idea of the Republic associated in memory with scenes of horror, with a mania for bloodshed and sadistic cruelty. At a distance and remote from the exaltation which it called forth, one cannot judge the Terror otherwise. The Thermidorian reaction, less bloody than the domination of the Mountain, did not at bottom govern in a different spirit or rehabilitate the Republic or abolish *the legend of '93*—which history was quick to aggravate—but quite otherwise. This legend will for long be a dead weight on the republican party.

It may be asked why the Convention ended in reaction; it was quite simply because only a minute minority of sincere and logical Democrats, of convinced Republicans, still existed in France. This minority had undertaken the direction of the government during the great crisis and there had worn itself out. Its leaders dead, and the majority becoming conscious of their number and strength, it had found itself reduced to impotence at the moment when its excesses, which were due as much to circumstances as to native brutality so far as most of the sans-culottes were concerned, had discredited it, at the moment when, circumstances having changed, it was no longer understood why it had committed them. The Constitution of the year III is a far more faithful reflection of the political opinion of the *directing classes*, those which have the material and intellectual resources for forming an opinion of their own, than the Constitution of the year I is of the will of the proletarians.

From the practical standpoint of the effort carried to its end, the task done, the useful foundations actually laid or made ready, the work of the Convention is, on the other hand, worthy of admiration. One cannot but be amazed at the amount that these men have been able to undertake and to achieve, plunged in a whirlpool of emotions so violent, beset on all sides by preoccupations at once so urgent and so divergent, interfered with at every instant by petitioners and demonstrators. No sooner are external anxieties dissipated and internal conflicts appeased, by the disappearance of opponents, than their sessions and the Committees which prepare for them become astonishingly *fertile in results.* A mere enumeration is enough to give an idea of them: starting from September, 1794, a general plan for national education was set on foot, the Normal School, the Conservatory of Music, the Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, the School of Oriental languages, the Polytechnic School, the Schools of "*the Public Services*" (bridges and roads, shipbuilding, the artillery, the engineers and others), the Institute of France, the Museum of French Monuments and so on were devised and organised. At the height of the Terror the activity of the Committee for Public Education was never relaxed. To it were due, over and over again, various new departures of the highest importance.

From the patriotic standpoint, the Convention did actually deserve the testimonial which it presented to itself: it had accomplished its task. Encompassed, from the first, while destitute of all organised resources, by difficulties without number and without name and confronted with all Europe in coalition, it had been able to provide for all needs and as was later said by Jeanbon-Saint-André: "*It had given the lie to kings.*" It had freed France from the invader; it had brought her to her natural frontiers. In that is its justification and its honour. "*I shall never forget that the Convention saved my country.*" This was the verdict passed on it, at the time of the Restoration, by Berryer, the great Royalist orator.

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CHAPTER XXXI

FROM THE BOURGEOIS REPUBLIC TO THE MILITARY DESPOTISM. THE DIRECTORY AND THE CONSULATE (1795-1804)

THE bourgeois Republic is no more than a brief episode in the history of the Revolution. Its inability to provide a stable government, to achieve the ordered security and tranquillity, to which the majority of Frenchmen aspired, favoured the ambition of a politician-general who, by promises of peace, order and material prosperity, was able to possess himself of power with but little difficulty. He soon restored the monarchy in his own favour under the form of *Caesarism:* a military despotism, theoretically justified by the assent of the people whose representative and, as it were, incarnation the *Caesar* claims to be. This usurpation, which juggled the Revolution out of existence under the pretext of completing and perfecting it, exercised over the destinies of France an influence which even today is not yet exhausted and which is far from having been auspicious in every particular.

I

The Directory

A. *The Legislative Body:* its composition

The government framed by the Constitution of the year III is known as the *Directory* from the name of the Council of five members to whom the executive power was entrusted. The Legislative Body, elected by the bourgeois and those in easy circumstances, was to a great majority composed of men of moderate opinions. *Two-thirds* of it consisted of old members of the Convention, highly averse to *Terrorism* but equally hostile to *Royalism.* It was only among the one-third elected from the new men that the Republic could meet with opponents: some *avowed Royalists*, others, more numerous, *constitutional Royalists*, old *Monarchiens*, who hid their real feelings pending an opportunity for their practical application. When the Council of Elders had been constituted, by drawing of lots among the elected aged forty or over and either married or widowers (Art. 83 of the Constitution), the two Assemblies held their first sitting on the 28th of October, 1795. In the following days they proceeded to the election of the Directors and these took possession of their residence, the Luxembourg palace, on the 1st of November.

Precautions taken against parties

The fear that the divisions and quarrels of the Convention might recur had inspired two decisions: 1. All deputies must wear an *official costume* before they could take their seats; the colours were different for the Elders and for the Five Hundred but, apart from this distinction, uniformity of dress symbolised as it were that of opinion; 2. The formation of groups on the seats of the Legislative Body was prohibited; all places were drawn for by lot and changed monthly, precautions in themselves somewhat futile but which indicate the dominant desire of the politicians of the time to agree and work together in concord.

Spirit of the majority

In reality, passion in the Councils had grown only too lukewarm since the majority, though still active enough *to put a stop to* anything which did not please it, never succeeded in framing *any positive plan of action* which would have given it a really firm footing in the country. It was composed of tired men, who had lost all delight in tussle; the momentary successes of the extreme parties, Royalist or Jacobin, while favoured by the political apathy of the nation, are mainly explained by the lack of persistent will and steadfast decision of this majority. Its one great object is to avoid being swamped either by the Jacobins or the Royalists.

B. *The Directors*

This is the object also of the Directors. Two of the five had had careers at the bar, *La Révellière* and *Reubell*, and three came from the army, *Barras*, *Carnot*, *Letourneur*. Except for Barras, formerly a viscount, they were bourgeois of well-to-do families. With the exception of Barras again, a man of pleasure, sceptical and in ill repute, caring for nothing but his private ends, they were honest and sincerely devoted to the Republic. They shared the direction of the great State services among themselves according to their aptitudes and qualifications, and the ministers beside them were no more than subordinates with little initiative, except those of Justice and Finance which, together with Foreign Affairs, were under Reubell who gave most of his attention to the latter.

Programme of the Directory

From the very first, the Directors announced in a "*proclamation to the French people*" their "*firm determination*" to carry into effect a programme in exact accordance with the wishes of the public in general: "*to wage active war on royalism, to revive patriotism, to repress all factions with a vigorous hand, to discourage all party spirit, to exterminate all desire for revenge, to enthrone concord, to restore peace, to regenerate morals, to unseal the well-springs of production, reanimate industry and commerce, to put down speculation, to give new life to art and science, to re-establish plenty and the public credit. . .*" The realisation of these attractive proposals could not fail to do much good, but, unfortunately, the means for achieving them were inadequate and altogether disproportionate to the difficulties.

C. *The opposition*

1. The Democrats

The Constitution of the year III had disappointed and exasperated all the Democrats who had cherished hopes that the Constitution of the year I would be adopted. Excluded from the government, held in suspicion, and made cautious by the tribulations which they had experienced during the Thermidorian reaction, but sincerely convinced that the Republic would perish in the hands which now held it, they proceeded to conspire and look for an opportunity of bringing the people back to a sense of their own real interest. Those who governed commonly characterised them as *Anarchists.*

2. The Royalists

The Royalists seemed by far the more dangerous; apart from the conspiracies and secret societies of which they could make use, as did the Jacobins, and did, in fact, use, they received large subsidies from England which effectively strengthened their propaganda; they were solidly supported by most of the Catholic priests, and their *fidèles—the fanatics* as they were called at the Luxembourg—and, finally, they had long nursed in various centres in France embers of insurrection, which were always ready to break into flame.[1] Moreover they resorted to the old practice of brigandage, which neither the Ancien Régime nor the Revolution had ever been able altogether to extirpate and which in the *Chouannerie* [2] harmoniously combined the king's service with pillage. They had therefore very substantial means of action on the countryside. Emigrants, who had clandestinely returned during the Thermidorian period, young men, solicitous for style and fashion, furnished them effectively with officers.

The "system of seesaw" of the government

The Directory, supported by "*the true Republicans*"—that is to say, by the majority of the Councils—deliberately played off, on "*the system of seesaw,*" one extreme party against the other, which had, however, the drawback of encouraging both alternately as each in turn took heart from the discomfiture of its opponent. It would, indeed, have been far better to secure complete freedom from complications, incessantly renewed and extremely dangerous, by dealing drastically with both adversaries, who from time to time became allies against the government; but this demanded an energy and perseverance which the moderates did not possess.

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[1] Normandy, Brittany and Vendée formed one; the Centre, Cévennes, Lyonnais, Franche-Comté are the others.

[2] It is probable that the *Chouans* derived their name from the *chat-huant* (owl) whose cry they imitated to assemble at night. Their name has remained an object of horror and an inexpiable insult in Maine.

D. *The difficulties encountered by the Directory*

It was necessary, above all, that the Directory should make itself respected by *a sound economic policy* which the bad financial situation and the depreciation of the assignat made extremely difficult to establish. It was also necessary that it should make *peace* with those of the coalition who were still at war with France and that this peace should be favourable, a matter which did not depend wholly upon itself. Finally it was necessary to implant *a spirit of discipline* and *a respect for the law* in men who had become far too accustomed to see urgent or embarrassing problems settled by violence. More or less everything, including the reaction towards enjoyment in life, at this time attaining or exceeding the utmost limits of licence and eccentricity in morals, manner and dress,[3] was against the Directory in its effort "*to replace chaos by social order.*"

The points of unwisdom in the Constitution

1. Elections too frequent

Furthermore in a country where public opinion was so inert and political life so dependent on the initiative and audacity of minorities, the Constitution proved to have most unwisely made the Councils liable to *instability*, a danger which they incurred owing to the renewal by a third to which they were yearly subject. It might happen—it was to happen—that this new third, elected under the influence of some political contingency or at the end of an intensive propaganda, was quite unlike that which it replaced and thus altered the majority in the Legislative Body so much as to bring it into conflict with the government in the direction and even the spirit of general policy.

2. Powers too separated

There is a second piece of unwisdom in the Constitution even graver than the other: no provision had been made, so great had been the desire to separate powers, for any regular means of dealing with differences of opinion between the executive and the legislative powers. The two powers had no alternative, in case of dissension serious enough to convince both that the safety of the State was at stake, but to go outside the law and resort to force, to a coup d'état. No régime could possibly be stable in which such a course was practically compulsory.

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[3] This is the epoch of the *Incroyables* and the *Merveilleuses* and all the extravagance of fashion in which the exuberance of life revenges itself for the constraints of the Terror by most reprehensible moral excesses. As a matter of fact, this crisis was not seriously at its worst, in this form of the relaxation of morals, except in Paris and the large towns.

The Royalist agitation

The first failure

Just at first all went excellently. The Councils decided (January 13, 1796) to make short work of the Royalist hopes by founding a national festival on the 21st of January in commemoration of the execution of Louis XVI. At the same time the police busied themselves, without, however, very much success, in tracing the threads of their various intrigues; they failed in particular to convince themselves that *Pichegru*, who commanded the army of the Rhine and Moselle, had been won over to Louis XVIII [4] and become a traitor. As, however, the military operations were a cause of disquiet to the Directory, he was dismissed, and for the time became powerless for harm. Next the two Vendean leaders, Stofflet and Charette, who had again taken up arms, again fell into the hands of the "blues" and were shot (February 25, March 29); their followers were dispersed or submitted. Risings, attempted in the Centre (departments of Cher and Indre) and in the Cévennes and another prepared in Lyons fizzled out. The discouraged Royalists, realising that public opinion was not in their favour, then relinquished all attempts to use force against the Republic and resolved *to labour for a change in public feeling and for the attainment of power in lawful ways.*

Changed tactics

Factors which favoured royalis

They found effective help in the Catholic renaissance which sprang up in the year 1796. Public worship was resumed in most of the communes and a number of exiled priests returned.

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[4] The little dauphin, son of Louis XVI, had died in Paris on the 8th of June, 1795. The Count of Provence, the elder of his two uncles, then at Verona, had taken the royal title; namely, that of Louis XVIII, the dauphin having been considered the legitimate king from the 21st of January, 1793, to the 8th of June, 1795. I do not think that we need take seriously any of the current legends as to the escape and survival of Louis XVII or any of the pretensions with which they are associated.

1. The Catholic renaissance

As a matter of fact, the clergy, in reaction against the anti-Christian measures of the Terror, and in conformity with the instructions of Pius VI, *had returned, in great majority, to royalism*, and their restored influence proved a valuable adjunct for the partisans of the monarchy.

2. The Jacobin agitation

Another was brought them by their worst foes, the Jacobins and the *Anarchists;* that is to say, the Republicans with Socialist tendencies. Disquieted by the progress of Catholicism and equally so by the *moderatism* of the government, swearing exclusively by the Constitution of 1793, regarded by them as the charter of democracy, exasperated by the continuance of the high cost of living and of speculation, several men of the Left ultimately combined and formed a small party of malcontents. They were far from thinking alike on all questions, but all were agreed on the need of a return to more democratic and more radically republican institutions. They founded the *Society of the union of Friends of the Republic*, known more simply as the *Club of the Panthéon*, because it had rented for its meetings a convent situated behind the Panthéon where the lycée Henry IV stands today.

II

Conspiracies and coups d'etat

A. *The conspiracy of Gracchus Babeuf.* The man

In this club a conspiracy was soon hatched. Its instigator was a journalist named *Babeuf* who had changed his modest Christian name of *François* to that of *Gracchus*, which he thought more in keeping with his opinions. He is a curious character; not highly educated, not always showing much sense, but honest and with strong convictions. His opinions had evolved in the course of the Revolution, through "patriotism" to Democracy and on to the *Agrarian Law*, that is to say, to a kind of Socialism of partition of goods among all citizens; he ended in Communism. He was persuaded that the only way to establish true equality and social justice was "*to abolish private property, to employ every man according to his talents or to the craft which he knows, to oblige him to contribute its fruits to the common store and to establish a simple administration for distribution.*" Such ideas could only make him regarded with horror in the minds of the bourgeois who then governed France. For the rest, he had throughout his life shown a remarkable gift for getting into mischief, and the months he had spent in prison made so impressive a record that before the time of Barbés he might well have been nicknamed *l'Enfermé* (the "put in prison").

Failure of his enterprise

The police, who had their eyes on him, easily informed themselves as to the influence which he had gained among the *Panthéonists*, and closed the club (March, 1796). Such a trifle did not discourage him. He organised a *Secret Directory of Public Safety* and a propaganda in all quarters, where he thought himself likely to find adherents. His aim, to begin with, was to overthrow the government and realise the Constitution of the year I. With native simplicity, he confided in the wrong people and was betrayed. The Councils passed a law which punished with death "*all those who by speech or writing promote the dissolution of the National Assembly or of the Directory . . . or the re-establishment of royalty or of the Constitution of 1793 . . . or infringements on public property or the pillage or partition of private property in the name of the Agrarian Law or in any other manner whatsoever* (April 16, 1796). Less than a month later (May 10) all the leading conspirators were under lock and key. An attempt made by those who were still at liberty to raise the troops at Grenelle, probably suggested by the police, had ended in disaster. They were cut down by the soldiers, a hundred and thirty-two were made prisoners, and were tried by court-martial. Babeuf and his lieutenants were brought before the High Court as provided by the Constitution (Art. 265) for the trial of deputies, Drouet, a deputy, being among the culprits. The court, meeting at Vendôme, sentenced Babeuf and his friend Dorthé to death and seven others of the accused to deportation (May 26, 1797).

General consequences of the conspiracy

The Babeuf affair had not been very serious, but the police had disproportionately exaggerated it and its main result was *to bring the Democrats and the Jacobins under the same ban as the Socialists and Communists:* the bourgeois and the small owners of property acquired a horror for the former from their hatred for the latter, and the Royalists made good use of the sentiment.

B. *The moderatism of the Clichyens*

They took equal advantage of the *moderatism* of many deputies, who called themselves Republicans, and possibly were so still in principle, but who began to show some readiness to forget the past and to become reconciled, for instance, with the exponents of order and authority, the emigrants and the refractory priests. Of these deputies many had become accustomed to meet at the house of one of the Five Hundred named Gibert-Desmolières, who lived in the Rue de Clichy; whence they were commonly called the *Clichyens*. Various Royalists soon slipped in among them of whose presence they were perfectly aware.

Under the influence of the party of Clichy, the Councils passed, between May and December, 1796, a series of abatements in the severity of the laws of the Convention against emigrants, refractory priests and *Vendémiairistes.*

The organisation of the new royalist propaganda

Finally the Royalists obtained the adhesion of the King himself and that of the English Government to their new tactics. Then, efficaciously aided by large subventions from England, they organised a vast plan for propaganda (end of 1796). Directed and administrated by a permanent office in Paris, it spread to all the departments in the guise of an *Institute of Friends of Order* or *Philanthropic Institute* and alleged that its sole object was to help the government in its struggle with the *Anarchists*. “*Friends of Order*,” a term which, in our contemporary history, will often be the label of the worst type of reactionary. A vast royalist society, framed on the pattern of Freemasonry, was thus established in France. In each department a committee, linked up with the office in Paris, conducted propaganda and collected adherents. Only the tried and trusted were admitted to initiation and allowed to take the oath; the common run of partisans were kept in the dark as to the real goal of the Directors, towards which they were none the less driven. The results of the scheme surpassed all expectation. The returned emigrants and the “*good priests*”—that is, the old non-jurors, now returned in large numbers—had done their work well. It does not appear that the government suspected either the depth of the religious feeling which they had sought to exploit, or the intimate connection of Catholicism with Royalism.

Result: the elections of 1797

At the elections of March, 1797, of the two hundred and sixteen former members of the Convention who retired, only thirteen were re-elected. On the other hand, about two hundred and fifty Royalists, among them the traitor Pichegru, and some avowed agents of Louis XVIII, entered the Councils. Pichegru was elected President of the Five Hundred and Letourneur, the retiring Director, was replaced by Barthélemy, secretly won over by the Pretender.

The Republicans react

The Reactionaries, as usual, showed neither prudence nor moderation. Their newspapers and pamphlets paraded their triumph and their hopes. The republican deputies took alarm and founded a club, the *Cercle de Salm*, to which they admitted persons unconnected with the Councils but of guaranteed *civism*. This “*Jacobinière*”—as it was called by the Reactionaries—organised on its side a propaganda based on “*constitutional clubs*” in the quarters of Paris and made ready for the inevitable struggle.

C. *The conflict between the majority of the Councils and the Directory*

The new majority soon disclosed their intentions; they revoked the laws condemning refractory priests to deportation and excluding relatives of emigrants from public employments. They never let slip any chance for bitter criticism of the Directory: they attempted "*to starve it*"; that is to say, refuse it the credits needed for government. In the Directory they had won or more probably deluded Carnot, who worked hard to relieve them from the ministers who stood in their way. But they failed to conciliate Barras, who did not think it in his own interest to help them, and who, after some hesitation, having laid hands on proofs of the treason of Pichegru, became leader of the counter-attack. He could manage this only by exceeding the limits of the law and he duly exceeded them. He warned the generals, Hoche and Bonaparte, in particular, of the danger in which the Republic stood, and induced them to issue a set of addresses threatening the conspirators. "*Tremble, royalists,*" wrote the soldiers of the army of Italy, "*it is no more than a step from the Adige to the Seine, tremble! Your iniquities are reckoned up and our bayonets will present the bill.*" The Constitution declared (Art. 69) that the Directory could not "*allow any body of troops to pass or remain within a distance of . . . twelve leagues*" (about fifty kilometres), "*from the Commune where the Legislative Body holds its sittings*"; but Hoche, under pretext of regrouping his troops, massed about 30,000 men at the constitutional limit and Bonaparte sent one of his generals, Augereau, to take command of the 17th military division on which the control of Paris depended.

The coup d'état of the 18th Fructidor (September 4, 1797)

The law of the 19th Fructidor

In the night between the 3d and 4th of September (18th Fructidor), Augereau's regiments entered the town and surrounded the Tuileries while the walls were covered with advertisements containing proofs of the treason of Pichegru. The general and his principal accomplices in the Councils were arrested. The republican minority then voted, on the proposal of the Directory, that the elections in forty-nine departments should be annulled: one hundred and forty-five deputies thus found themselves deprived of their seats; fifty-three others were sentenced to deportation in company with two Directors, Barthélemy and Carnot, and some notorious Royalist conspirators. The laws against emigrants and refractory priests were restored and made stricter; all priests were forced to swear "*hatred to royalty and anarchy, attachment and fidelity to the Republic and the Constitution of the year III*" under penalty of deportation by a simple decree of the Directory. The press was placed under police supervision for a year.

Its completion

A few days later, forty-two papers, in the departments as well as in Paris, were suppressed and a law gave the Directory the right to deport owners, directors and contributors, to sequester their property and to search their premises (September 8). Finally, the government proceeded to a huge purge of its diplomatic and administrative staff. The Directory on its own authority replaced the elected officials by men of its own choice. Some courts-martial had about one hundred and sixty returned emigrants shot. On the whole, however, the repression of the Royalist plot, grave as it had been through English connivance, was less severe than that of the plot of Babeuf. It was sufficient to make royalism henceforward confine itself to conspiracy on a small scale and to individual enterprise.

The lesson of the coup d'état

It is possible that the Directory, in restoring to a coup d'état, had used the one means of salvation at its disposal, that the necessity which, it is said, has no law, had dictated its course and that in using violence it had simply anticipated its enemies. It had none the less given a deplorable and dangerous example and it had committed itself to government by force in the future.

D. *Why the Directory did not do better by its victory*

Its indisputable victory might have brought it substantial prestige had it been able to solve the *two great problems of the time: that of finance and that of peace*. It had solemnly burnt

1. The financial crisis

the *planche aux assignats* (the wood block from which the assignats were printed) February 19, 1796; that is to say, officially abandoned the inflation which had lowered the value of paper money to almost nothing,[5] but it could replace the assignats only in another form, the *mandats territoriaux* (territorial warrants directly secured on the national property like the first assignats), which, immediately on issue, terribly depreciated. The war indemnities levied on conquered countries, for instance on Italy, had been no more than a drop in the ocean. After the 18th Fructidor, Ramel, the Minister of Finance, risked an operation on a wide scale. He arranged (law of the 30th of September, 1797) that debts owed by the State should be reduced by two-thirds, thus bringing them in line with the real value of paper money and that the remaining third, called *consolidated,* should be entered in the Great Book of the Public Debt instituted by the Convention. This practical act of bankruptcy caused great discontent and completely discredited the financial administration of the Directory, on which, too, recoiled the bad reputation of Barras. It was hard to believe in the integrity of a government one of whose members—after Fructidor, their chief—spent his time in the society of speculators and business adventurers reputed to stick at nothing.

2. Persistence of war

Abroad, the victories of Bonaparte had, indeed, compelled Piedmont, and afterwards Austria, to lay down arms (October, 1797), but England remained in the field and the Directory seemed wedded to a policy of republican propaganda, which ill concealed highly ambitious intentions, and gave rise to fears of continental complications at no distant date. Hope for the return of universal and stable peace had again to be thrown aside, while France, tired out by five years of strife and anxiety, sighed for repose.

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[5] At the beginning of 1796 a hundred livres in assignats were worth on the average seven sous or about thirty-five centimes. By the law of the 21st of June, 1795, the State did not recognise this depreciation and officially held to the nominal value of its paper. This did not benefit either its own revenues or the salaries of its officials.

3. Catholic disquiet

Peace at home, too, must, it seemed, no less be postponed; the measures passed on the 19th Fructidor against the refractory and non-juring priests were interpreted by the Catholics as a renewal of religious persecution for which they saw no justification in the general situation and which they attributed to anti-Christian bigotry. At this moment the government saw fit, in the last months of 1797 and in the course of 1798, to consolidate the use of the republican calendar with its hostility to the Sunday and to reorganise the civic cult which was to be celebrated every *Decadi* in "*the place intended for the assemblage of citizens*"; that is to say, in the church. Finally, a new religion had appeared of which the director, La Révellière, had made himself patron. It called itself *Theophilanthropy* because it worshipped, in common, God as conceived by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Humanity. Rationalist, but socially conservative, a religion of bourgeois Republicans, it posed as the *reasonable* substitute for Catholicism, as opposing *nature* to *superstition.* Its worship, in some degree not unlike that of Protestantism, came without becoming official—the Decadian worship alone being official—into use in the churches. This twofold usage was offensive to the Catholics. Undoubtedly Theophilanthropy never drew many disciples (they were nearly all confined to Paris and the great towns), but in its beginnings[6] it could hardly be told what it might become, and its anti-Catholic bias could not be doubted. The religious question, which becomes in all cases so easily an irritant, contributed largely to the growing unpopularity of the Directory.

Theophilanthropy

4. Absence of a moderate party

A supreme misfortune for the victors of Fructidor was their inability to form a predominant *moderate party* through which they might have governed. The moderates, in the country as a whole, were all *negationists* who had no will but *to say no*, and were besides generally dissatisfied with the policy, foreign, financial and religious, of the Directory. They had no real political programme, no organisation, nothing of all that makes a party. *The controlling voice in action thus lay with the extreme parties.*

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[6] The first reunion for worship held by the adepts took place on the 15th of January, 1797.

E. *The new Jacobin danger.* Elections of 1798

The coup d'état of Fructidor having undone the Royalists, the Jacobins took courage and worked on among the amorphous and apathetic masses, in preparation for the elections of the year VI (1798). These turned in their favour the more so that, in many places, the Royalists rode for a further fall by lending them their support. The Directory, perturbed by this result, carried out, in conjunction with the majority of the Councils, a fresh coup d'état, less dramatic than its forerunner but, in some degree, more momentous, since it was justified by no overt danger, and placed the operation of the Constitution in subjection to the arbitrary will of the government. The elections of thirty-seven departments were modified by authority, ninety-eight deputies were excluded, and partly replaced by forty-five elected by the minority; fifty-three seats remained vacant (22d Floréal, year VI, May 11, 1798).

The coup d'état of the 22d Floréal

For a year the Directory was master and did not make ill use of its authority. Its efforts for economic recovery seconded by the active diligence of the labouring classes achieved excellent results.[7] It made a start with the financial reorganisation, whose benefits were to be reaped and their merit to be appropriated by the Consulate, but whose foundations (the four great direct taxes: on land, persons and movable property, patents, doors and windows and the principal indirect taxes with the State monopolies) had been laid by a series of laws passed between October, 1798, and January, 1799.

The respite of the Directory and the recovery in economic life

Unfortunately the policy of intervention abroad adopted

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[7] The first exhibition of products of French industry was held at the Champ de Mars in September, 1798.

F. *New difficulties, new crises*

1. Complications abroad: the Second Coalition

by the Directory was to bear its natural fruits. While Bonaparte in Egypt (May, 1798) conducted a brilliant but unfortunate campaign, a formidable European coalition was formed against France, and the resounding victories applauded in Paris by the royalist youth (*la jeunesse dorée*) were soon followed by fears of invasion, a fresh source of unpopularity for the Directory, now denounced as incapable of defending the country from the results of the adventure into which it had plunged it.

2. Dissensions of the victors of Fructidor

The inert majority and the opposition between the extreme parties

In other respects the men of Fructidor, united by dread of a common peril, were far from united by common political views. The majority in truth had no political views whatever; at its two extremes, however, two groups gradually grew up and differentiated, starting early in 1799. *The one* desired a return to the régime of strict legality; it disapproved of the coup d'état of Floréal and of the tendency to seek support from the *advanced* of the Jacobin fringe. *The other* considered the Constitution hopeless and desired a root-and-branch revision; their leading light was Siéyès, who carried, they said, in his head the plans for a Constitution which was a perfect marvel. The two parties, united in hostility to the Directory, which Siéyès had entered (May 16, 1799), made ready for action.

The elections of 1799 and the coup d'état of 30th Prairial against the Directory

The elections of April, 1799 (year VII) were very unfavourable to the passive Centre and strengthened the two extreme groups. These then joined forces and, in their turn, carried out a coup d'état (30th Prairial, June 18). Three Directors (La Révellière, Merlin of Douai and Treilhard) were compelled to resign. Barras, who, seeing how the wind blew, had made approaches to Siéyès, remained in power and the three vacant places were filled by Gohier, an honest man, Moulin, a brave officer and a good Republican, and Roger-Ducos, who had ties with the Bonapartes. The whole ministerial personnel was changed.

G. *The end of the Directory*

What favoured the *revisionists*

The new government was Republican; of its five Directors and seven Ministers eight were Conventionals, of whom seven had voted for the death of Louis XVI (they were called the *votants* (voters); but its very existence was against the Constitution and in favour of the revisionists. Royalist agitation, then reviving in the form of bandit raids, the hopes sustained by the acobins, expressed in the formation of a society called *the Union of the Friends of Liberty and Equality* (July), and above all apprehensions aroused by the successes of the foreign coalition, all combined to create an opinion that nothing had been changed, that peace, so painfully longed for at home and abroad, was still remote, and that salvation could come only from change of régime and the advent of a strong government capable of dealing firmly with the warring parties.

The coup d'état of the 18-19th Brumaire (November 9-10, 1799)

This change was effected by one more coup d'état. Based on an understanding between General Bonaparte, just back from Egypt—he arrived at Paris on the 16th of October—and Siéyès, and on the pretext of an alleged Jacobin plot, it was a military operation carried out amid general indifference. The Elders placed Bonaparte in command of the 17th military division and of the National Guard and decided to transfer the Councils to Saint-Cloud in order to be at a safe distance from the Jacobins! Barras, Gohier and Ducos were ordered to resign; the former consented, the two latter refused, but were put safely under guard in the Luxembourg. *Bonaparte and Siéyès had thus freed themselves from the Directory.* On the following day, at Saint-Cloud, the Councils realised too late what the general was about, and only wished that they had taken no hand in his scheme; they reproached him with violation of the Constitution; cried out upon the Dictator and talked of his outlawry. But they lacked decision and he, knowing himself lost if he did not take drastic action, dispersed them with his troops, reminding the latter how he had "*led them to victory.*" They, for the rest, believed in their simplicity that they were doing good work for the Republic, and returned to Paris singing the famous revolutionary refrain, *Ça ira.* Paris did not budge. The moral of the Day had been drawn in advance by the victor, in his speech to the Council of Elders: "*The Constitution! You have destroyed it yourselves. You violated it on the 18th Fructidor, you violated it on the 22d Floréal, you violated it on the 30th Prairial. It no longer commands any man's respect.*" The government of the Directory had died by the disdain of law which it had fostered.

III

The provisional Consulate. (November 11-December 25, 1799)

A. *Bonaparte and Siéyès*

On the evening of the coup d'état a few miserable remnants of the two Councils, with difficulty collected at Saint-Cloud by the partisans of Bonaparte, passed a law which entrusted the executive power to a *Consular Executive Commission* composed of three members: Siéyès and Roger-Ducos, former Directors, and General Bonaparte; they adjourned the Legislative Body to the 20th of February, 1800, and formed for its interim representation, two executive commissions, one for each Council, of twenty-five members each. The *Provisional Consulate,* as this government was called, lasted from the 11th of November to the 25th of December, 1799. It carried out a "*revision*" of the Constitution of the year III, overturning it from top to bottom and *preparing to transmute the Republic into a despotism for the benefit of General Bonaparte.* The ambitious and unscrupulous man who profited by this proceeding met with scarce any opposition worth mentioning: merely a few survivors of the preceding period, generals and politicians, still faithful to the Republican idea. The great men of the Convention, who had foreseen that the Revolution might end in this way, were unfortunately no longer alive; the Terror which destroyed them had ultimately proved itself Bonaparte's best auxiliary. It is probable that neither the great Girondins nor

The position of Bonaparte

the great Montagnards would have allowed him to do anything of the kind. The unpopularity of the Directory rendered any popular resistance extremely unlikely and, as a matter of fact, there were barely five or six departments in which a few protests were made; they gave way at the first show of military force. The Councils despatched some deputies as delegates, real *Representatives on Mission* chosen from among their accomplices, into each of the twenty-four military divisions with the object of explaining and giving a favourable explanation of the two Days of the 18th and 19th Brumaire. They succeeded excellently, none desiring to compromise himself for the sake of the vanquished. The future was too obscure to be the subject of any transports of joy, the dominant impression was one of "wait and see." Siéyès had thought he was forging himself a tool; he soon realised that he had given himself a master; never a fighter, he promptly gave in. His example proved contagious, and Bonaparte was able to have his own way. He took, however, a few precautions and dropped the strong measures of the 19th of November against a certain number of deputies. *He did his best to raise hopes in all parties alike*, at once relaxing the official severity towards the emigrants and simultaneously posing as the immaculate Republican. *He was peremptory in regard to the organisation adopted for government*, being determined that this should be such as to favour his designs for domination.

The revision of the Constitution

The plan of Siéyès

In principle, the "revision" of the Constitution should have been conducted by the two Legislative Commissions. They first took into consideration a plan of Siéyès, complicated and hardly practical, but whose intentions were quite clear: dreading alike both demagogy and despotism, it arranged that the people, though their powers were all recognised, could exercise none of them, and that the supreme authority should ostensibly be with a great functionary, actually powerless. This high personage, called the *Grand Électeur*, was regarded as incarnating the sovereign people. He appointed all State functionaries, beginning with *two Consuls*, equal and entrusted, one with Home and the other with Foreign Affairs. A *Council of State*, representing the government, was to prepare and present laws, a *Tribunate* to discuss them, a mute *Legislative Body*, a kind of national arbitrator, to decide between the Council of State and the Tribunate, was to pass or reject them; *a College of Conservators* was to see that the law remained constitutional and to appoint the Grand Elector, the Tribunate and the Legislative Body. The function of the citizens was to frame by their votes vast lists, derived one from another, which submitted for choice by the Grand Elector or the Conservators the names of men declared to be fit for functions either *communal*, or, higher, *departmental*, or, higher still, *national*. In other terms, the elections were juggled. The Commissions proved not inhospitable to this singular farrago, for their members saw in its realisation the prospect of places for themselves, snug, safe and profitable. *The days of civic disinterestedness were over.*

The personal ideas of Bonaparte

But Bonaparte on his side had ideas of his own, long matured, and already in essence set forth in letters written by him during the Italian campaign in 1796-1797. All converged to one end: *a sure foundation for the supremacy of the executive power.* He divined that Siéyès thought of putting him in the Grand Electorate, and saw that if he assented he would find himself high and dry in a pompous sinecure where all his activities would be sterilised and whence he could wield no real influence whatever. He characterised the Grand Elector as "*the disembodied shade of an idle king*" and declared that "*never would a man of some talent and a little honour be willing to resign himself to the rôle of a hog to be fattened on a few millions*"*!* Better to be nothing than a laughing-stock. This, however, was an alternative which he did not seriously contemplate. He cut short the hesitations and quickened the slow

The drafting of the new constitutional statute

pace of the Commissions by convoking meetings in his own house, where in a few evenings under his stimulation and almost under his dictation the new Constitution was drawn up. In his impatience to complete it, he caused it, even before some indispensable questions had been dealt with, to be signed by the members of the Commissions present (December 13) and, it having been decided that the Consuls should be first appointed by the Constitution, he proposed, while they were still sitting, to entrust the task of choosing them to Siéyès. Possibly not unironically he loaded that unhappy theorist with the burden of the illusory dignity of the post as Grand Elector, which he himself had despised. Siéyès showed himself a good loser and named Bonaparte as *First Consul*, and at his suggestion elected an old Conventional, *Cambacérès*, and an official of the Ancien Régime, effaced during the Revolution, *Lebrun*, as Second and Third Consuls.

The plebiscite

The Constitution was to be submitted to a plebiscite, the result of which was proclaimed on the 18th of February, 1800, which gave 3,011,007 *affirmatives* to 1,562 *negatives*. But Bonaparte had not waited for this result before putting the new régime in force: a simple decision of the Legislative Commissions, taken on the 24th of December, 1799, had ordained that it should come into operation on the following day, the 25th of December. The whole governmental and legislative staff was immediately chosen and installed. The results of the plebiscite proved that public opinion did not resent this anticipation. Bonaparte indeed had said to it the very word which it awaited: "*The Revolution is fixed on the principles which began it. It is finished.*[8]*—Peace is the first of needs as it is the first of glories.*" [9]

Bonaparte anticipates it

B. *The Constitution of the year VIII.*

The Constitution of the year VIII (22d Frimaire, December 13, 1799) contains no more than ninety-five articles, mostly

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[8] Proclamation of the 15th of December.

[9] Letter to the King of England on the 25th of December.

Its general characteristics

very short. Bonaparte visibly did not wish to do more than to fix principles, reserving to himself the task of, later on, giving them such life as he saw fit, by laws and regulations. It is quite incomplete: not only does it contain no *Declaration of Rights* but it makes no mention of *the great public liberties* (association, meeting, the press, conscience), and this "omission" is doubtless not involuntary. It says hardly anything about the organisation of the departments and almost nothing of justice: the First Consul knew why.

Borrowings from Siéyès: anti-democratic precautions

The electoral system

Meanwhile it had borrowed lavishly from the system of Siéyès, mainly in the precautions taken to reduce the power of the people to nothing. All Frenchmen of twenty-one years of age and over who have not lost their civic rights by a conviction or by bankruptcy, and who are not domestic servants, receive the status and exercise the rights of citizens. These rights are limited to the specification "*by voting of those among them who are believed to be most competent to conduct public business*," and presenting them for the choice of the government by drawing up *listes de confiance* (lists of men who were to be trusted) (Art. 7.). There are three lists: the first *communal*, the second *departmental*, the third *national*, and they are arranged as follows: In each *communal arrondissement*[10] the electors of the communes assemble and designate *one-tenth of their number;* this forms *the communal list* from which the communal functionaries are to be chosen. The citizens in this list form in their turn a College which by designating one-tenth of its members composes *the departmental list*, that of candidates for departmental functions who in their turn again choose one-tenth of their members to form *the national list* from which the national functionaries are to be taken. These lists are made up and revised every three years by those who have drawn them up. *As a matter of fact the right of suffrage no longer exists.*

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[10] The Constitution omits any definition of this *communal arrondissement;* it is an area which groups together a certain number of communes.

In its application a transitional measure still further singularly accentuated the insufficiency of these pseudo-elections from a democratic point of view. Article 14 provided that "*the lists of eligible candidates shall be drawn up for the first time in the course of year IX*"; that is to say, that *the whole personnel* of legislators and functionaries necessary to the working of the Constitution *is to be first chosen arbitrarily and without any elections* by the two Commissions of the old Councils and by the First Consul, so that the *listes de confiance* will be used only to fill vacancies.

The *legislative power*

The legislative power is placed in the hands of four bodies:

1. The Council of State

1. A *Council of State* is "*under the direction of the Consuls . . . charged with drafting proposed laws*" which it supports before the Legislative Body. Its members are appointed and dismissed by the First Consul (Arts. 52 and 53). The revolutionary principle of the separation of powers is thus here for the first time infringed.

2. The Tribunate

2. A *Tribunate*, of one hundred members elected by the Senate, discusses proposed laws and votes for their adoption or rejection. It then proceeds to uphold its *vœu* (proposal) before the Legislative Body (arts. 27 and 28). It has equally the right to express its *vœu* in the same way "*on laws made or to be made, upon abuses that need correction, on any ameliorations which should be undertaken in any parts of the public administration.*" It can denounce to the Senate as unconstitutional "*the acts of the Legislative Body and those of the government*" (Art. 28 and 29).

3. The Legislative Body

3. A *Legislative Body*, of three hundred members also elected by the Senate, hears on both sides the speakers of the Council of State and those of the Tribunate on projected laws submitted to them, then decides by a secret scrutiny and "*without any discussion on the part of its members*" (Art. 34).—Legislative Body and Tribunate are renewed annually by one-fifth.

4. The Senate of Conservation

4. A *Senate of Conservation* (*le Sénat Conservateur*) with eighty members "*irremovable and for life and at least forty years of age.*" It co-opts its own members from a list which contains three names for every vacant place chosen from the *national list:* one by the Legislative Body, one by the Tribunate, and the third by the First Consul. Meanwhile the Constitution (Art. 24) itself appoints siéyès and Roger-Ducos senators and decides that, to begin with, they will be associated with the Second and Third Consuls and *all four appoint the majority of the Senate,* which will then complete itself afterwards. This Senate, besides its right of electing *the Consuls and the Legislators, the Tribunes, the Judges of Cassation and the Commissioners of Accounts* (Art. 20), has the duty of watching over the Constitution and of seeing that nothing unconstitutional finds its way into the law (Art. 21). The duties of a senator are not heavy and carry with them a salary of 25,000 gold francs.

The *executive power.* The three Consuls

It is only too clear that this assemblage of independent and even opposed bodies in no way forms a whole capable of withstanding *the executive power,* whose *right of initiative* binds them fast. The executive is entrusted to *three Consuls,* elected for ten years by the Senate and indefinitely re-eligible (Art. 39). *They are not equal* and the first is the real head of the government; the other two have only a consultative voice and a supplementary character. In all cases "*the decision of the First Consul is sufficient*" (Art. 42). "*He promulgates the laws, appoints and dismisses at his own will members of the Council of State, the ministers, the ambassadors . . . the officers of the army and navy, the members of the local administrations and the commissioners of the government in the law courts . . .*" (Art. 42. *The ministers are merely his commissioners.* They are saddled with responsibility for the government, whose real exercise is in his hands; he himself *is irresponsible.* He has more power than a constitutional king but

The authority of the First Consul

he is decennial. In Bonaparte's mind this clause was certainly merely provisional. The royalist plots, which recommenced as soon as Louis XVIII was persuaded that the Consulate was not preparing for the restoration of the legitimate monarchy, allowed him to cover with ease and rapidity the stages which still separated him from despotism pure and simple.

IV

Steps towards despotism

A. *The installation of the new government*

From January, 1800, onwards, the government was a personal one. Having formed the Legislative Assemblies as he saw fit, Bonaparte recruited with much discernment an excellent administrative staff from competent men of all parties.[11] (The Council of State had decided that he might employ even emigrants if he thought it well to do so.) He then proceeded to organise a strong government which fully realised the conception of Siéyès: *confidence comes from below, authority from above.* For the rest, his authority, in kind, is regardless of law, and the political history of the four subsequent years is, at bottom, that of a succession of arbitrary acts of the First Consul's, petty coups d'état, in fact, which make institutions no more than the elastic frame within which he does as he pleases. The least opposition, reticence, or reserve, irritates or makes him impatient. He regards them as personal insults. Already, in effect, his *personality is ubiquitous and all-embracing.* He dreads even his own servants lest they should obtain too much influence and escape his control: he divides into two such ministerial departments as give too much authority to their holders (Finance, War, Police): he divides their chief branches among *general directorships,* which whittle down the authority of each minister. Before long mere discussions in the Tribunate

The political spirit of Bonaparte: authority will wound him like criticisms and he will say, "*There is a noxious extravagance in the Constitution, that of the Tribunate,*" and he will think of reducing it to thirty members, pending its total suppression.

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[11] He said, *"To govern with a party is sooner or later to become dependent upon it. They will not catch me in that way: I am national."* This is the real formula of his government with the reservation that he confounds the interest of the nation with his own.

Suppression of the liberty of the press

Just as he will not admit that there is in France any party but his own, so he is soon ready no longer to tolerate the existence of any but his own opinion. The liberty of the press is odious to him; thus about the 17th of January, 1800, sixty newspapers out of seventy-three are suppressed in Paris. By the end of the year only nine political papers will be left in the capital, all under close supervision. Fouché, Minister of Police, has installed in his service a special bureau which exercises a severe censorship over all writings, papers, pamphlets and books.

The installation at the Tuileries

Little by little he discarded the locutions, familiarity and simplicity of deportment characteristic of the revolutionary democracy. From this point of view it is noteworthy also that he left the Luxembourg and took up his quarters in the residence of the former king, at the *Tuileries* (February 19, 1800). For want of a coach, he arrived, indeed, in a cab, its number hidden by a sheet of paper, but he entered in full state, with military pomp and to the sound of music. The Tuileries, in fact, formed a convenient frame for the institution of a small court which from modest beginnings will gradually grow larger. The Marly of the new master was the *Malmaison,* whither he went from time to time, to take rest and where he would relapse into somewhat uncourtly ways which with him were congenital.

On the morrow of Marengo

Till the battle of Marengo (June 14, 1800) he went cautiously, and made no open disclosure of his secret ambitions. But this victory aroused the greatest enthusiasm among the people, and while he used it systematically to depreciate the successes of other generals, Moreau, Brune and Macdonald, so, too, he exploited it as proof positive of his providential mission. The legend of his *star* dates from this time. Several months before, after making severe examples, he had freed himself from the Chouannerie organised in the West; he had even been able to do away with the army needed to hold it in check, and to entrust the work to the gendarmerie alone. Towards the Royalists he needed to dissimulate no longer. The "Pretender" had written to him twice, in February and in June, as though expecting him shortly to restore the legitimate monarchy; he answered on the 7th of September: "*You must no longer hope for your return to France; you would have to march over 100,000 corpses. Sacrifice your interests to the repose and the happiness of France.*"

The idea of hereditary succession and of monarchy

The repose and the happiness of France! Bonaparte claimed to take charge of them himself, and he saw, with satisfaction, the progress about him and among men more attached to the monarchic idea than to its traditional form and to the family of the Bourbons, of a change which flattered his hopes. His brother Lucien, then Minister of the Interior, issued a short tract as a test of opinion (November 1, 1800). In this he laid stress on the security, which the government of the First Consul represented, for the "*class of landowners and educated men, against a mad multitude,*" and allowed to be inferred how trouble might return "*if all at once Bonaparte should be lost to the country*" and no successor to him assured. But the animosities aroused among Republicans by this suggestion was such that Bonaparte had to admit that the nation was "*not yet ripe for heredity,*" to disavow his brother, to relieve him at the Ministry of the Interior and send him to Spain as ambassador.

B. *Royalist plots assist the ambition of Bonaparte*

It was only through royalist blunders that he was able to recover the ground lost by Lucien's indiscreet haste. He thought that the chief resistance he would have to encounter would come from the Jacobins, and as far as the state of opinion in political circles was concerned, he was right. A large number even of consular functionaries remained attached to the Republic and persisted in regarding him as no more than its head servant or at least in desiring him to confine himself to this part. For this reason his police sought for means to compromise the most "advanced" of his opponents in a more or less imaginary plot. The Royalists, henceforward convinced that he in person formed the chief obstacle to the return of the king—in which they were possibly not wrong—were active in search for some way to get rid of him. The simplest, of course, would be assassination; which some among them, under the inspiration of *Georges Cadoudal*,[12] had for some time past been preparing. On the 24th of December, 1800, an "*infernal machine*" exploded at the passing of Bonaparte's carriage in the Rue Saint-Nicaise. As is often the case with these engines, the target was not touched, while about eighty persons were killed or wounded.

The *infernal machine* (December, 1800)

The police had no difficulty in identifying the culprits and arrested their leaders. But it was to the interest of the First Consul that the authors of the attempt should be Jacobins; he had said and caused it to be said from the first that it came from them; he took advantage of this to draw up a list proscribing one hundred and thirty declared Republicans, some of whom were deported, others imprisoned and afterwards interned in the provinces under police supervision. Moreover, the authors of the infernal machine were executed. This cumulated "repression" might be lacking in logic; it was enough for Bonaparte that it should be profitable. He naturally exploited to the utmost the emotion produced by the real danger which he had run; it is the classic procedure of all governments on

Proscriptions of opposing Republicans

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[12] He was a Breton who had taken part in the war of Vendée; having been taken prisoner he had escaped and then plunged into the Chouannerie. He there made himself extremely formidable and refused all accommodations with the *blues;* having been compelled to lay down arms (May, 1796) he became a conspirator. It only depended upon himself to make an advantageous agreement with Bonaparte; he preferred the cause of the king to his own personal interest.

their defence, who are in want of something to turn public attention into a fresh channel.

The successes of 1801 and the *purge* of the constituted bodies

Diverse events came to assist the taking by Bonaparte of the decisive step. The first was *the conclusion of the Concordat* (July 15, 1801) which brought the Catholics to his side, pending the hour of their ultimate disillusionment; next the signature of the *treaty of Lunéville* (February 9, 1801) which confirmed the defeat of Austria and exhibited him as the grand pacificator before a France burning for peace; finally a thorough *purge* of the Tribunate and the Legislative Body, to which he proceeded under the pretext provided by the renewal by one-fifth provided by the Constitution of the year X. By a veritable coup d'état, the Senate was made to pronounce which members should be excluded, and compelled *to draw up the list of those who should remain.* His notorious opponents were all eliminated and the others given to know what to expect if they did not hold their tongues. Their hatred of Jacobinism had put them out of touch with the people; Bonapartism was gradually driving all before it with the masses; what could they do but groan over their impotence and console themselves by expressing in salons, which they knew to be safe, opinions which they believed to be bold? The farther they went the nearer they came to the attitude of the early Republicans of the class of Condorcet, who devoted their energies to the purely academic discussion in private of political principles. Bonaparte characterised them as *idéologues* and regarded them with contempt.

The opposition of the army

The only opposition, which could still give him anxiety, was that of the army, which had remained Republican and whose most illustrious generals, Moreau, Brune, Bernadotte, Masséna, Macdonald, added to their political convictions a personal hostility to the man, who, with the same start as themselves, had reduced them to the position of subordinates. If any one of them had dared abandon the attitude of reserve tinged with spite and of sullenness leading nowhere which they adopted, give the malcontents a resolute lead and speak out his mind, it might, even then, not have been too late to frustrate the design of the insatiable careerist, for the soldiers still swore by the Republic alone; but not one dared venture, and they were incapable of action in concert. Their opposition dwindled away in mere talk and bravado. To dissociate himself from them, Bonaparte made occasion to proclaim to the Council of State on the 4th of May, 1802, that "*never should military government prevail in France*" except if the nation be "*brutalised by fifty years of ignorance*," and he added, "*the soldier knows no law but force. He considers nothing but himself. He sees nothing else.*" He himself was firm for the incontestable pre-eminence of the "*civilian*"!

C. *The treaty of Amiens and the Consulate for life*

On the 25th of March the *treaty of Amiens* was signed with England, establishing that peace with all for which the nation had so long wished. On the 26th of April a *senatus-consultum*—that is to say, a decision of the Senate, an unconstitutional procedure which Bonaparte found convenient because it dispensed with the discussion by the Tribunate and the voting by the Legislative Body—declared an amnesty for the emigrants: this, it was thought, was the precursor of complete pacification at home.[13] The Opposition could only keep silent. The treaty of Amiens was presented to the Legislative Bodies on the 6th of May, and immediately it was suggested in the Tribunate that the First Consul should be given "*a conspicuous token of the national gratitude.*" The Senate at first thought of prolonging his tenure of power by ten years, but Bonaparte with the support of the Council of State secured a plebiscite on the question: "*Shall Napoleon Bonaparte be Consul for life?*" There were 3,568,885 affirmatives against 81,374 negatives. The liberals had generally abstained and all the Reactionaries had voted and made their dependents vote wholesale.

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[13] In reality this measure did not attain its object, which was to bring the emigrants to the side of the government, because it restored to them only *such of their possessions as had not been sold.* The result of this disposition was that some recovered the whole of their landed property, others merely a part, others nothing at all. All who believed themselves aggrieved retained an implacable hatred for Bonaparte and the Revolution.

The Constitution of the year X

A *senatus-consultum* of the 16th Thermidor, year X (August 4, 1802), which ostensibly amounted to no more than an organisation of the Constitution of the year VIII, modified the latter to so great an extent as to have earned for itself the name of the *Constitution of the year X*. Its innovations had all one aim: to strengthen the ever mounting authority of Bonaparte. The three Consuls were appointed for life by the Senate, but the First had the right of presenting the two others for the choice of the Senate and even of presenting his own successor under such form as might be judged convenient. He also presented candidates for vacancies in the Senate and he could appoint as senator anyone whom he wished in excess of the eighty members provided by the Constitution up to the number of one hundred and twenty.

The powers of the First Consul

The powers of the Assemblies

This means that the majority in the Senate depends upon him. The Tribunate is reduced to fifty members. All important business is withdrawn from the Council of State, whose legitimate debates hamper the autocracy of Bonaparte, and confided to a *Privy Council* of ten members whom he appoints himself "*at each session*" (Art. 57). This is the culmination of his distrust! The Senate, by a skilful regulation of *senatus-consulta,* receives a right to suspend the Constitution, to add to its provisions, to substitute an emergency decision for the law. The *senatus-consulta* are "*debated*" by the Privy Council and so are at the disposal of the First Consul. The "lists of notabilities" of the year VIII are abolished and a new electoral system is established. Simple citizens, meeting by cantons, constitute a *Cantonal Electoral College* which constitutes two other Electoral Colleges, one of the *arrondissement*, the other

New electoral system

of the *department*, the latter necessarily *composed of those who are most heavily taxed.* Every College has a President appointed by the First Consul and nominates candidates for the functions of the commune, of the canton, of the arrondissement, of the department, while it is the First Consul's privilege to choose functionaries from these lists. To the College of the arrondissement, which has from one hundred and twenty to two hundred members according to the population, to that of the department, which counts from two hundred to three hundred, the First Consul has the right of adding to the former ten and to the latter twenty members chosen by himself, sufficient to adjust the majority as he pleases.

D. *The last step.* The monarchic airs accentuated

After the establishment of the Consulate for life, the monarchic airs of the government became accentuated. On the 15th of August, 1802, the festival of *Saint-Napoléon* [14] was celebrated for the first time. It took the place of the old royal festival of Saint-Louis (August 25) and was soon to supplant the republican 14th of July. The precedence of the Christian name is a clear indication of the monarchic trend. The new airs assumed by the court and the Tuileries which begin to be frequented by various well-known *ci-devant* nobles, are another. The life of high society is renewed and reorganised with various brilliant salons as its centres. Popular enjoyments are revived as public prosperity, great in these years of 1802 and 1803, becomes more firmly established. The countrymen, at last freed from brigands by a zealous gendarmerie, are filled with gratitude for the Consular government. Opposition dwindles and gradually dies out. Just enough remains to give Bonaparte a convenient excuse for the completion of his design.

The "plot" of 1804

Georges Cadoudal came secretly to Paris, took hiding, and made ready to strike at Bonaparte in person. Pichegru did likewise, in the hope of inducing Moreau to take action against the "usurper." The police were not long in laying hands on some of their accomplices and through these in unravelling the whole network of the plots (January-February, 1804). Moreau was arrested (February 15); the generals suspected of connivance with him were dispersed in distant commands, placed on the unattached list or arrested. Pichegru and Cadoudal were hunted out and captured in their turn (February 29 and March 9).

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[14] There was no Napoleon in the Calendar, but a little good will was enough to discover an Egyptian martyr named *Neapolas* whose commemoration day fell on the 15th of August.

The murder of the Duke of Enghien

The spies and *agents-provocateurs* of the police alleged, however, that Royalists and Republicans were combining in a huge plot against Bonaparte. A prince was ready to direct the enterprise. One of these equivocal agents announced the presence of the Duke of Enghien, son of the Prince of Condé, at Ettenheim, *in the territory of Baden*, but at the gate of Alsace. His reports were full of misstatements and discrepancies. The slightest investigation must have disclosed them and proved that the young man, really brought to the neighbourhood by an affair of the heart, had not the least idea of raising France in insurrection. But Bonaparte had no desire to be told the truth. All he wanted was an opportunity to work up opinion with a great plot and, after his fright from Cadoudal, who had just been arrested, to give the Royalists such a lesson as would discourage them. He accordingly caused the duke to be abducted, in flagrant disregard of the right of nations, on the night of the 14th to the 15th of March, to be transported to Vincennes and there shot after a mock trial, by order, though his innocence was evident, on the night of the 20th of March. A crime so inept as only to be explicable by the effect upon Bonaparte's nerves of so many conspiracies.

The Empire

Nevertheless they continued to do him great service. The Senate, much moved by the dangers which the "great man" had just run, decided to present an address inviting him to "*complete his work by making it as immortal as his glory*"

(March 27, 1804). This was the commencement of the last campaign for monarchy. Bonaparte consented to admit that "*the government of several, of five, of three*" was not suitable for France. "*His reason*" had convinced him of this and had shown him that "*the French nation needed a hereditary head.*" The idea once launched, the diverse State bodies took it up zealously and with much display of enthusiasm. Yet it failed to take definite form and public opinion remained indifferent. Bonaparte then requested the Council of State, after the close of the sitting, to pronounce on the principle of heredity; the principle was adopted, not without some objections. The master then called a full Privy Council and informed it that he wished for *the Empire*, and with it the right of regulating the succession; while he gave it to understand that it would do well to make haste, as the troops, whose impatience was no less than their insight into the situation, were ready to proclaim the Empire themselves (April 23). Between blackmail and threats success was complete; on the same day the Tribune *Curée*, suitably coached beforehand, proposed to the Tribunate a motion by which Napoleon Bonaparte was "*declared Emperor of the French*" while the imperial dignity was to be "*declared hereditary in his family.*" Carnot alone voted against it (May 3). The motion, transmitted to the Senate in the form of a *vœu*, there met with only feeble opposition [15] and the Assembly declared that "*the glory, gratitude, love, reason, interest of the State, all proclaim Napoleon hereditary emperor*" (May 4). The senators indeed accompanied their address by an indubitably firm and courageous assertion of the rights to liberty, equality and sovereignty of the people, and their title to receive, in the form of new powers accorded to the Senate itself, inviolable legal guarantees to the end that "*down to the most distant future the nation should never be*

The start of the campaign (March)

The Curée proposition

The vote of the Senate (May 4)

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[15] Siéyès, Grégoire, Volney, Lanjuinais voted against; Cabanis, Choiseul-Praslin, a rallied *"ci-devant,"* abstained.

forced to take again its powers into its own hands and to exact retribution for its outraged majesty."

The Constitution of the year XII

Vain precaution. Napoleon was not the man to divest himself of the least particle of authority, to admit the least touch of control. And the Senate was obliged to reconcile itself to the position and to authenticate the new régime, in due constitutional form, by the *senatus-consultum* of the 28th Floréal, Year XII (May 18, 1804). It is sometimes called the Constitution of the year XII. A plebiscite confirmed the accomplished fact; the figures officially declared, which are of doubtful authenticity, were 3,572,329 *affirmatives* against 2,569 *negatives.*

The end of the "conspirators"

It remained only to liquidate the past and to decide the fate of the conspirators: Pichegru, one fine morning, was found strangled in prison, and the inquest found it *suicide.* Moreau, tried in the presence of an audience which was in his favour, was acquitted, but Napoleon, by a scandalous abuse of authority—which he repeated on other occasions—exacted a second vote. This time the accused was condemned to two years' imprisonment (June 9). He was admitted to mercy on the condition that he leave the country for America, and he did so. Cadoudal was sentenced to death and executed (June 24).

The end of the Republic

The word *Republic* was retained on public documents until April, 1806, and on the coinage till October, 1808, but this was no more than a mere verbal fiction, a classic reminiscence—the Roman emperors continued to use the term *respublica* to signify the State—and possibly a last concession to the immolated victim. The Republic was dead: killed by the usurpation of a soldier, thus completely fulfilling Robespierre's shrewd prediction. Napoleon could quite well have made himself *king*, but this title, apart from its persistent unpopularity, appeared to him of less lustre than that of *emperor*, which to his soaring imagination associated him both with Augustus and Charlemagne.

V

The causes of the triumph of Bonaparte

A. *The royalists*

Georges Cadoudal said to his judges: "*We have done more than we intended; we meant to give France a king and we are giving her an emperor.*" He spoke truly and with insight; the royalist conspiracies had indeed given Bonaparte the pretext he needed to enable him, step by step, to cut his path to power from the Republic to the despotism. But this must not be taken as more than a contributing cause of his success. Indubitably more important is the disappearance of the "heads" of the Revolution: the ambitious general found before him a France depleted of men with a will of their own, void of greatness of character. It can hardly be conceived that he would have succeeded in his iniquitous design in face of the great Conventionals. Yet the prime reason for his success lies elsewhere.

The play of popular sentiments

The indifference of an ignorant people was at this time proof against all *sentiments* but three: that of *material interest;* that of *religious interest;* that of *patriotic interest.* The Terror and the Directory had outraged the two former and, by their long-continued wars, had exalted the third to the profit of the army. Bonaparte, assisted by personal gifts of the first order, had the art to present himself as an incarnation, as it were, of the victorious army; and he was able at the same time to convince the French that he was immune from the ruling passion for military success: *he was bringing glory and he promised peace!* Peace under a strong and just government, bridling the tongue of the empty and baleful *avocats*, discouraging the speculator and the forestaller, organising public order, religious tolerance, social tranquillity, and bringing prosperity and well-being in its train—all, in fact, that he had declared in 1799 that he would achieve, and which he did, in truth, achieve in large measure by 1804. This was *the real* *reason why he was so readily accepted:* those who had attempted timidly and with broken ranks to arrest him in his portentous advancement had neither root nor stay in the country.

B. *The reforms of the Consulate*

From the first day after the coup d'état of Brumaire he devoted himself with indefatigable energy to work in the Council of State; the results achieved by this most remarkable effort were such as to induce the highest possible opinion of him who directed it; it amounted to no less than a thorough reform of the whole organisation of France. I confine myself here to marking its chief points.

1. The departmental administration

The law of the 28th Pluviôse, year VIII (February 17, 1800), reformed the departmental administration. Every department is divided into *arrondissements,* and has a head, the representative and agent of the central power; this is the *Préfet;* each arrondissement is governed by a *Sous-Préfet,* every commune by a *Maire.* Side by side with the Prefect a Council of State in little, *the Council of Prefecture* and a Legislative Body in miniature, *the General Council;* side by side with the Sub-Prefect, *the Council of the arrondissement,* side by side with the Mayor *the municipal Council.* These different Councils have no political action or jurisdiction; they are concerned solely with the affairs and immediate interests of the group which they represent. Altogether, the strictest possible centralisation replaces the Revolutionary dispersion: *there is a reconstruction, as thorough as possible, of the State as a unit complete* in its parts. For Bonaparte, persons are even more important than institutions; he takes the utmost care in the choice of his Prefects; he chooses them from among men of experience, members of the old Assemblies, of the Revolution and the Directory, old magistrates, administrators of diverse origin, but all tested and tried men. This gives him, as a whole, a staff of exceptional quality, honest, enlightened and staunch, which quickly put all things in order.

2. The administration of justice

Diverse provisions, notably that of the 27th Ventôse, year VIII (March 18, 1800), reformed the organisation of *justice*, upon the foundations laid by the Constituent Assembly. The appointment of the Judges passed into the hands of the government[16] and Bonaparte recruited them on the principle which he had applied to the choice of the Prefects and Sub-Prefects. The magistrature became again a homogeneous body, one of the constituted bodies of the State and under its authority. The Judges, in principle, are secured by their inviolability against abuse of this authority, but Napoleon will know very well how, when he thinks it advisable, to evade this obstacle; yet, in current usage, the consular justice is good, in that it is both honest and competent.

3. The *Civil Code*

To facilitate his task and to give uniformity to his actions and to his jurisprudence, Bonaparte went on to the completion of the draft of a *Civil Code*, the dream of every good administrator, at any rate since Colbert, the principle of which had been approved by the Constituent Assembly. This work, carried on through the whole consular period, was completed only on the eve of the Empire, it being enacted on the 21st of March, 1804, that the existence of the *Civil Code of the French* was formally confirmed. Its draftsmen, the most competent jurists of the time, with Bonaparte himself for their President, had endeavoured to be, above all things, clear and practical; in this they succeeded, and by drawing from the old royal ordinances, decisions of Parliaments and laws of the Revolution for all that was best in them, by co-ordinating and adapting the whole to the needs of the France of their time, they succeeded in achieving a work of such value to humanity as to have been, since then, to the majority of civilised countries, admittedly a source of inspiration in the codes which they have drawn up for themselves.

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[16] The First Consul appoints all judges except the Judges of the Peace, whom the cantonal electors offer to his choice, in the proportion of two candidates for each post (Constitution of the year X, Art. 8) and the judges of Cassation whom he offers to the choice of the Senate, in the proportion of three candidates for each seat.

4. The finances

In prosecution and completion of the work effectively commenced under the Directory, the administration of the finances was reorganised. Thanks to the proper assessment of the taxes and their punctual collection, *France for the first time balanced her budget* and this without overburdening the tax-payers. The *Bank of France*, established on the 24th Pluviôse, year VIII (February 13, 1800), became the regulator of public credit. A return of confidence accompanied that of order and the clearing up of the fiscal position and became one of the essential elements in the rapid recovery of the country.

5. The relations of the Church and the State: the *Concordat.* Was it necessary?

The religious situation created by the Civil Constitution of the clergy was liquidated by the conclusion of an agreement with the pope. In reality, *religious peace was returning of its own accord in virtue of liberty.* Given a little patience, the last wrangling between the "*constitutional*" priests (those who had reconciled themselves to the Civil Constitution), the "*jurors*" who had taken the civic oath, and the "*refractory*" priests who had refused it, would have come automatically to an end. Many of those most bitter in the contest had died; the others desisted. But Bonaparte tolerated liberty in no quarter and he adopted the old idea of the philosophical theorists of the eighteenth century: *the Church in the State and in the service of the State.* He saw in the Church "*a lever for influence*" whose handle he desired to grasp. A complete unbeliever, though not quite immune from superstition, he looked on religion as a tool for his despotism. The pope, whose authority over the Church of France, already strongly contested by the prelates of the Ancien Régime, had been further much diminished by his opposition to the Revolution, had on his side every reason to desire the resumption of his official relations with the State.

The negotiations

The negotiations on the Concordat, unofficially commenced almost on the morrow of the battle of Marengo and officially at the beginning of November, 1800, were long and laborious; no less than twenty-one redrafts of the proposed agreement were necessary before a formula acceptable to both parties was arrived at. In reality, each of the two sought solely its own advantage and strove to secure, to the detriment of the other, concessions of greater or less importance. Several times a break was imminent. Finally, signatures were exchanged on the night of the 15th and 16th of July, 1801.

The contents of the Concordat, and the *Organic Articles*

The Concordat is a treaty between the Holy See and the Republic: it re-establishes official intercourse between the pope and the French State and regulates relations between Church and State in France, under the spiritual authority of the pope, and under the administrative authority of the State. The Catholic religion, against the wishes of the pope, did not again become the religion of the State, but it recovered a place in the framework of the State and a declaration was made that the Consuls were "*individually professing it.*" The government was to appoint archbishops and bishops (one for each department) and the pope was to confer their canonical investiture. For the rest, Bonaparte had taken care to exclude from the agreement everything concerned with the policing of religious worship, the administrative relations between the clergy and the government, the *organic* measures of the Concordat, all of which he regulated by decisions taken on his sole initiative and by his own will: these are *the Organic Articles* (February to March, 1802). They were incorporated in *the law of the 18th Germinal, year X* (April 8, 1802), which declared the Concordat effective. The pope found, and with good reason, that these *articles* added to the treaty, and without his consent, various important provisions, but Bonaparte disregarded his protest; he relied on these very additions to reduce the opposition which the Concordat would encounter.

Opposition to the Concordat

This opposition was strong in all the State bodies and among the generals. Voltairians, disciples of Rousseau as they were, filled with contempt and horror for what they called "*religious servitude,*" the politicians of the time were to a great majority either definitely hostile to the Church or, if not, hostile to its reincorporation in the State. Bonaparte passed them over, and it was not long before religious peace, a peace of submission, reigned in the restored official Church.[17] A comprehensive oath imposed on all priests and taken by them ensured him their fidelity and the time is near when he will say "*my bishops and my curés*"; as he says "*my prefects and my gendarmes.*" To him both were on the same level. In other respects, he was able to recruit from both clergies, that of the Ancien Régime and that of the Revolution according to his constant principle, an excellent ecclesiastical personnel with which the faithful were fully contented. It was only later that the drawbacks of the Concordat and above all the mischievous pretensions which lay behind it were to become manifest. For the time being, Bonaparte reaped only its advantages.[18]

6. Public education

The law of the 11th Floréal, year X (May 1, 1802), laid down the principles of a huge reconstruction of public education, but the only part which was immediately realised (from October, 1802, to October, 1803) was that which concerned the secondary education which was to educate *the well-to-do classes,* mould the minds of those who were to be *leaders* and form officials and officers. The bourgeois believed it a boon for themselves, and the people were, so far, not seized with any desire for education.

Conclusion

Assuredly these reforms, which were nearly all accomplished by judicious selection and intelligent application of provisions borrowed from the ancient royal administration and from the Revolution, were primarily devised to increase and consolidate the means of action of the government; they seemed to be, none the less, *a benefit to France.* They were in other respects sufficiently logically deduced, sufficiently firmly founded to survive chance and change and to endure. Many of the institutions which they fathered still exist today; they are not always answerable to our present needs, but we shall have great difficulty in relieving ourselves from them, so stout are the roots which they have struck in our public life.

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[17] A schism nevertheless arose from the application of the Concordat: the men who remained inflexibly faithful to the emigrant bishops, whose resignation was enforced by the pope, formed *the Little Church* on the fringe of official Catholicism. It has survived in a few places down to our own day, but has never been of any great importance.

[18] The reformed Churches also received a Statute of State and accepted with joy *the official recognition* which it conferred on them.

The reforming work of the Consulate and the stability of the consular government were a strong contrast to the want of equilibrium in the Directory. This was the principal justification for the Empire in the eyes of its contemporaries; it is this which hid the real facts from their eyes, the abdication, namely, of the France of the Revolution under the hands of an adventurer of genius, the substitution of an egoistic and monstrous despotism for the régime of liberty for whose sake so many generous citizens had sacrificed their lives. The Revolution had lacked the time necessary for giving the people the education by which alone they could have become attached to a régime which might realise the principles of 1789.

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CHAPTER XXXII

THE REVOLUTION AND EUROPE (1789-1803)

The situation at the beginning of the Revolution

AT the beginning of the Revolution there seemed to be no reason to expect complications abroad. The neighbouring sovereigns had no inclination to intervene in France or to end an anarchy which delighted them, in that it gave them one important factor less in general policy to consider. They believed themselves to be in no way bound up with Louis XVI; the idea of a great family of kings, each member aiding and abetting the others when needed, was remote from them. In a Europe acquainted with many forms of government, none took the view that any one form should exclude others and be interdicted or destroyed in their interest. Finally, the principal States were at that time engaged in affairs which kept their hands full.

The frame of mind of the ruling sovereigns

That of the Constituents

On the other hand, the intentions of the Constituent Assembly were peaceful. The decree of the 22d of May, 1790, introduced as an essential provision on this point into the Constitution (Heading VI), declared: "*The French nation will abstain from entry into any war whose purpose is conquest and will never employ its forces against the liberty of any people.*"

Nevertheless, as early as 1792 a war begins which exercises a great influence over the march of the Revolution, which involves France in formidable dangers, yet in ten years leaves her victorious. From the French point of view it means at first no more than a struggle for independence and freedom. To these motives are soon added the desire to propagate the gospel of the Revolution.

I

The rupture of France and Europe

A. Modification in the point of view of the sovereigns

The cause of this rupture between France and Europe is a change in the disposition of men's minds which sprang simultaneously on both sides between 1789 and 1792.

The foreign princes viewed with disquiet the welcome given to revolutionary ideas by the most educated and open-minded of their subjects. They soon came to fear the contagion for which the French Philosophers had opened the way by spreading their ideas through all civilised countries of the West. The exaggerations of the emigrants, who drew an appalling picture of the state of France, and their self-interested incitements, the diatribes of French journalists against the "tyrants" and soon after the secret letters of the king and the queen were not long in giving substance and definition to this fear. It seemed also to be plainly justified by some actual facts.

The facts which disturb them

1. The affair of Avignon

There was in the first place the affair of Avignon. This town and its territory, the Comtat Venaissin, had belonged to the pope since the fourteenth century. The pontifical government had been far from good and, as was inevitable, the French revolutionary movement soon invaded the little State. Unfortunately, unanimity within it was not achieved: while on the 12th of June, 1790, Avignon had pronounced in favour of annexation to France, Carpentras had remained aristocratic and papal and the bulk of the Comtat was contented with demanding a constitution from the pontiff. Anarchy and civil war were soon rife throughout the country to such an extent that the Constituent Assembly, after first postponing its decision (November, 1790), resolved upon intervention. At that moment Pius VI had just condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, a fact which freed them from any need to be diplomatic. The Assembly sent troops to restore order and then consulted the people of the Comtat on the question of annexation: the great majority voted in its favour (102,000 *for* it, 17,000 *against* and 31,000 abstentions); it was proclaimed on the 12th of September, 1791, in spite of the efforts of several deputies who brought up against it the decree of the 22d of May, 1790. The pope naturally made his voice heard in vehement protest. It was, in fact, for any prince of that time, a thing unheard of that territory should be taken from its legitimate sovereign merely because its inhabitants desired that this should be done. Such an example was highly disquieting.

2. The affair of the German princes of Alsace

Alsace was a second source of trouble. A number of German princes, members of the Holy Roman Empire, such as the Duke of Württemberg, the Margrave of Baden, the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, owned in Alsace some feudal domains over which they had, in theory, exercised kingly rights which had dwindled, as a matter of fact, to nearly nothing under the encroachments of the agents of the King of France. The suppression of the seigneurial régime in France had reduced them to nothing at all. The Assembly would allow no exception. The Germans kept their possessions and their right as landowners; for anything over this, they were subject to the same régime as the French feudatories. They protested in virtue of the treaty of Westphalia, and the King of Prussia supported them. In France search was made, incidentally without success, for a compromise which should suit them; (special compensation for their rights or purchase of the domains in question); and, finally, their recriminations were met by the assertion of the right of the Alsatian populations to freedom and French nationality (end of 1790). The German princes were indignant at such a violation of their traditions.

3. The affair of Varennes

The arrest of Louis XVI at Varennes (June, 1791), as commented on by the queen and by the emigrants, appeared so conspicuous an outrage upon royal majesty as to be a matter of concern to every sovereign in Europe, as the Emperor and the King of Prussia described it in the declaration which they issued at *Pilnitz* on the 27th of August, 1791. It is in this manner that the apprehension of potential danger to themselves from the revolutionary agitation made the kings sensitive to the misfortunes of Louis XVI. At the same time they began to be visited by temptations, consistent with the policy of rapine and partition which held the field at that epoch, to aggrandise themselves at the expense of a France now enfeebled by discords within; they thought in any case that they might gain considerable advantages for themselves by charging Louis XVI a high price for the help which he demanded.

B. *The new state of mind of the Girondins*

The Girondins of the Legislative Assembly were, on their side, ardent propagandists. Many of them had acquired the habit of inveighing widely and vehemently in the public press against the emigrants and the kings. They continued to do so in the Assembly and in the clubs. More and more they persuaded themselves that France, having won freedom for herself, ought to confer it upon the world in spite of all despots. The disquiet caused them by the equivocal attitude of Louis XVI, the confabulations between sovereigns, the declaration of Pilnitz in which they saw an instant menace of intervention,[1] the armed assemblages of emigrants to which the Elector of Treves opened his territories, all made them bellicose. Brissot and his friends, playing, without knowing it, the game of the court, which desired nothing so much as war, in the hope of a defeat for France, set themselves with their utmost strength to urge the Assembly and the government to fight. It has already been told how, in spite of the clear-sighted opposition of Robespierre and a few Jacobins who took the same course, bellicose tendencies in the end prevailed in the Assembly and even drew the great club in their train.

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[1] In reality, this famous declaration which announced the intervention of the Emperor and the King of Prussia to restore the King of France to freedom and power was nothing more than a platonic demonstration, since the Emperor Leopold had made his action conditional on the adhesion and collaboration of the other sovereigns and he was well aware that England would not move. The Brissotins did not know this.

C. *The declaration of war and the First Coalition*

The moderation of Leopold II delayed the conflict; his death and the accession of Francis II, young, bellicose and a strong absolutist (March, 1792) precipitated it. The first declaration of war came from France, but it had become inevitable. In the somewhat chimerical hope of keeping the princes of the Empire and, above all, Prussia outside the contest, this declaration was addressed only to "the King of Bohemia and Hungary" (April 20). But this king was Francis II himself and he had made an alliance with Prussia, so that it was with the whole Austrian State and with Prussia that France had in fact broken. Piedmont ranged itself on the side of the emperor, then, at the beginning of 1793, between January and April, after the execution of Louis XVI, which served as a pretext for their unfriendliness and their decision, England, Holland, Spain, the Italian States, all Western Europe, made a coalition against France. *This is what is known as the "First Coalition," which was to last until the treaties of 1795.*

II

The armies of the Revolution

A. *Recruiting*

The army of 1792

France seemed in no state to hold her own against so many adversaries combined, and her weapons for defence had in fact to be forged while she fought. In 1792 she had no more, in principle, than an army of the line recruited by volunteers and the National Guard. The former comprised 150,000 men, in itself a small number, while a good part of them, moreover, now existed only upon paper. It needed reorganisation from top to bottom, having lost all spirit of discipline and having been deprived of many officers through the emigration (about three thousand in the infantry, perhaps one-third of the whole). It was still, however, excellently equipped in the specialised branches of artillery and engineering, in which fewer officers had emigrated. It was not immaterial that the best branches of this army should have been those whose organisation and training are most difficult and take longest. The National Guard in which all Frenchmen fit for service between eighteen and fifty years of age were theoretically enrolled, did not form, as a whole, a force which could be utilised in war; it could, at best, only provide a reservoir of recruits.

The volunteers

In 1791 a levy of volunteers for the National Guard was resorted to; it gave an effective force of one hundred and sixty-nine battalions; but for want of material in equipment and arms only eighty-three were on foot when the campaign began. Nevertheless, a second levy was ordered forthwith and produced the volunteers of 1792. Recruiting was slow till July, when the declaration that "*the country is in danger*" kindled zeal in all "patriots." Even that zeal was all too little to provide for the quantity of recruits which the coalition made necessary at the beginning of 1793. The Convention then named a fixed figure: it asked for 300,000 men (February, 1793). The levy went ill and was obstructed in many districts; in Vendée it was actually the prime cause of insurrection. The Assembly then proclaimed the *levy in mass* (August 23, 1793). All Frenchmen were declared to be under permanent requisition until there was peace, and each, according to his condition, age and means, obliged to take part in the national defence.

The levies and the requisition

From the point of view of recruiting, *obligatory service replaced voluntary engagement*. . . . This revolutionary system was to last till 1798 when the *Jourdan law* was to organise *conscription* and the calling up by classes of men of from twenty to twenty-five years of age. Thanks to the requisition, the Convention was able to place ten armies in the field, more than 700,000 men, an enormous figure for the time, which increased up to 1,100,000 or 1,200,000 *on paper* in March, 1795.

The volunteers at first formed battalions distinct from the older troops. They elected their officers, accepted only a mitigated discipline and took a lively interest in politics. Their patriotic ardour was undeniable, but their steadiness under fire defective. By a happy combination, known as *the amalgamation,* suggested by Dubois-Crancé, these volunteers were joined up with battalions of the older troops in *demi-brigades* (February 21, 1793). The results were excellent: the new soldiers contributed drive and dash; the older, experience and steadiness to the combination.

The amalgamation

B. *The organisation and tactics*

Beyond all others, *Carnot,* an officer of the engineers corps, who, first in the Military Committee of the Legislative Assembly, later in that of the Convention and, later still, in the Committee of Public Safety, had the chief hand in the organisation of this army, though several ministers of war, notably Servan, gave him valuable aid. Not having much confidence in his troops, whom he regarded as insufficiently coherent and too ill drilled for elaborate manoeuvres, he devised a tactical method which might make the best possible use both of their qualities and their defects; that is to say, *the massed attack* in which numbers, weight and dash compensate for want of technical training.

The command

Leaders were at first provided from officers of the royal army who had remained faithful to the Revolution—La Fayette, Dillon, Rochambeau, Kellermann, Houchard, Custine, Beauharnais, Lückner, Dumouriez, who was for some months, from July to November, 1792, the great leader and hero of the national defence. But these generals, except Kellermann, were rapidly eliminated; some joined the emigration (La Fayette), or passed over to the enemy (Dumouriez). The others were dismissed or, later, executed for want of energy or capacity. In reality, being, as professional officers, habituated to a conception of war quite foreign to the tactical necessities which were imposed upon them, they had not the gift of quick adaptability and, most frequently, full of good will as they were, they remained unequal to their task. Their supplanters, that wonderful constellation of generals, which achieved the salvation of the country and earned afterwards military glory for the Directory, the Consulate and the Empire, came from the battalions of volunteers or from the ranks of the lower officers or the non-commissioned officers of the army of the line. The volunteers elected their leaders but under a rule that they could choose only old soldiers. Thus many soldiers who had been disbanded, non-commissioned officers, even some lower officers, of the old royal army, who had left the service, because they were debarred from promotion as being commoners or of insufficient nobility, together with officers of the old provincial militias who had received commands in the National Guard, enlisted in these volunteer battalions: they became officers through election. They thus had a chance to distinguish themselves and indeed they did so: Lecourbe, Oudinot, Victor, Championnet, Davout, Jourdan, Gouvion-Saint-Cyr, Maison, Molitor, Mortier, Soult, Lannes, Masséna, Marceau, Moreau, Bessières, Suchet, Brune, Lefebvre and others. Among the subalterns of the old army were Bonaparte, Berthier, Bernadotte, Macdonald; among the non-commissioned officers, Hoche, Ney, Kléber and others. Thus it is hardly correct to say that France was conducted to victory by "improvised generals." They were merely generals whose promotion had been rapid; but all had served before. All possessed military knowledge, and circumstances had permitted them, more quickly than in other times and with more freedom, to develop and demonstrate their talents. The few really "improvised" generals employed by the Revolution, Ronsin, Rossignol, Léchelle, for instance, made poor work of their task.

C. *Equipment and armament*

But to find soldiers and officers to lead them was not enough; they had still to be equipped and armed. This was a matter of great difficulty. When the war first began, the royal arsenals had, under orders and systematically, restricted their production. After the fall of royalty, manufacture resumed its activity and various purchases were made abroad. Next it was the turn of men of science to be requisitioned—Monge, Bertholet, Fourcroy, Chaptal—and set to search for means of accelerating and perfecting the manufacture of powder and all war material, the quicker tanning of leather and the like. France, about the middle of 1793, became practically one immense workshop, toiling exclusively for national defence. All metals which could be utilised were requisitioned: church bells became cannon, and lead coffins bullets; cellars and stables gave saltpetre for gunpowder. Representatives on Mission, such as Saint-Just, and Le Bas in Alsace, *unshod the patriots* in the street; that is to say, commandeered, from the feet of passers-by, shoes for use by the army. The wooden *sabot* became the national shoe. Despite all these efforts the needs of the army were always in excess of the supply and the splendid misery of the soldiers of the year II, who marched with bare feet or shod with sabots or wisps of straw, in rags and half starved, is not merely a legend.

D. *The allied armies:* appearance and reality

At first sight the fine professional armies of the Coalition seemed greatly superior to the troops of the Revolution. Admirably equipped, led by trained officers, drilled in every manœuvre of an enlightened tactical system, under strict discipline, they might well believe that they would make short work of the sans-culottes. With closer scrutiny it is, however, easy to see the causes of their final defeat. Their generals are either old and indolent or unable to make up their minds or to emancipate themselves from academic rules. Frederick II, their great idol, had left no worthy successors behind him, and his alert and opportunist system of tactics, *reduced to hidebound rules*, was now nothing like what it had been in his own hands: it has lost its soul. The general who is to direct the invasion of 1791, the Duke of Brunswick, knows his business, but is timid, has no confidence in himself, is fossilized in principles, hampered by his own methods. The soldiers are mercenaries, machines unanimated by any personal passion, employed by a government for the realisation of a political design in which they take no interest whatever; only esprit de corps and the fear of punishment keep them together and obedient to the word of command.

Moral superiority of the French army

Before them, the army of the Revolution, national to the backbone, animated by ardent patriotism, sustained in its civic enthusiasm by the Representatives on Mission, convinced that the fate of France and of freedom hangs on its courage, with leaders, daring and *free from the pedantry of the schools,* ravenous for distinction, and with the prospect of the dread ascent to the guillotine [2] before them, if they show weakness or incapacity, such an army is, at bottom, the better, and it adapts itself quicker to circumstances. Its venturesome tactics and its *style* of fighting, new and regarded as hardly seemly, perplex and even scandalise its opponent. It must be added that it was no easier in those days than in these to establish real understanding and effective collaboration between allies united against a common enemy by the mere necessity of the moment far more than by deep sympathy or any real community of interests. There was always, for instance, a jealousy and almost a hostility between the Prussian and the Austrian generals, which was no small advantage to the leaders of the French army. In one sense and in essence *the victory of France over the Coalition is that of a nation over governments*, of living passion over soulless mechanism. The French could not afford to lose heart for a moment; their failures exalted their courage by stimulating their fears. The Allies, on the contrary, had no motive for any desperate perseverance in their design when they found that success was evading them; they abandoned it as a political venture which was mistaken and had miscar-

Misunderstandings between the Allies

Meaning of the French victory

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[2] Custine, Houchard, Biron, for instance, fell on the scaffold with many others.

ried. England alone showed real perseverance, because she regarded the occupation of Belgium by France as an economic peril to herself which she must at all costs prevent.

III

The first coalition till the treaties of Basel (1792-1795)

A. ***The invasion of 1792***

1. The Austrians

At the very first, the Coalition, Austrians and Prussians, obtained successes which justified their utmost hopes. The first named began in the North, by dispersing the troops which had advanced for the offensive planned by the Girondin ministers, which disbanded in a sudden unaccountable panic. They then crossed the frontier and proceeded to set siege to Lille which blocked their way. They might and should have been content with masking the position and marching quickly upon Paris. But so bold a blow was not according to the rules and they delayed to bring against Lille—which, incidentally, they did not take—every known resource of established *poliorcetic* technique.

2. The Prussians

Meanwhile, the Prussians, under Brunswick, crossed the Eastern frontier and obtained without trouble the capitulation of two strongholds which should have held them up for a long time: Longwy (August 23) and Verdun (September 2); in these the Royalists had paralysed and discouraged the defence. Moreover, the queen kept the Allies informed to every decision made by the Council of Ministers. Although the manifesto of Brunswick, which she had exacted and inspired, had not produced in Paris the panic on which she had counted and she owed to it the Day of the 10th of August, she had no doubt whatever that the Prussians would shortly reach Paris, a conviction which was shared by many men of the Revolution. Roland himself was proposing to transport the seat of government to the south of the Loire. The event, however, fulfilled neither expectation. The Prussians, irregularly provisioned and obliged to wait on their supply train, advanced only very slowly towards Champagne; they gave Dumouriez and Kellermann time to concentrate their forces and manoeuvre. On the 20th of September Brunswick suddenly came into contact with the two generals before *Valmy*[3] at the pass of the Argonne. The action that took place on the spot was hardly a real battle, the French losing but 300 and the Prussians 184. But the Prussians, failing to silence the enemy's artillery and not daring to push home an attack against troops apparently resolute, halted and retreated. Thus the cannonade of Valmy had the moral effect and the material result of a great victory, won on the very day when the Convention met for the first time.

Valmy (September 20)

Jemappes (November 6)

Dumouriez could have quickly crushed his foe now famished, demoralised and decimated by dysentery; he preferred to negotiate with its leader and allow it to retreat over the frontier. He himself promptly turned on the Austrians over whom he gained a decisive victory at *Jemappes* not far from Mons, in Hainault, on the 6th of November.

The diverse doctrines of the Convention on the object of the war

France had freed herself from the invader and, at the same time, recovered her liberty of movement. Success, too, had soon altered the outlook of her leaders. Some, amplifying their ideas as pioneers of liberty, called for *war upon kings;* others, more alive to material advantages and reviving the dreams of the old royal diplomacy, talked of the *conquest of the natural frontiers*, of the annexation, for instance, of Belgium, whose inhabitants, swayed more by the memories of their old communal liberties than by the attractions of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, were showing themselves deplorably "*unworthy of liberty!*" Yet the two tendencies might be reconciled and indeed were so. Meanwhile, Dumouriez conquered Belgium and soon carried operations into Holland. Custine had already occupied the left bank of the Rhine (September-October), Montesquiou had entered Savoy and was welcomed with trans-

[3] Valmy, at the pass of the Argonne in Champagne, department of the Marne, arrondissement of Sainte-Menehould.

port by the inhabitants (September), Anselme, with a few soldiers, had possessed himself of Nice and its county.

Their application: propaganda and annexations

On the 19th of November the Convention had voted with enthusiasm for a decree which was to be translated into all languages and was to the effect that "*the National Convention declares in the name of the French Nation that it will accord brotherhood and help to all people who wish to recover their freedom.*" On the 27th of November it annexed Savoy on a report by Grégoire, who declared that France, having renounced the "*brigandage of conquests,*" in no way aspired to universal domination, but that she yielded to the wish of the Savoyards, who professed great love for the French, who would make them a "*just return.*" The annexation of Nice was voted at the end of January. On the 31st of January, Danton, demanding the union of Belgium with France, which would evidently involve some slight coercion, said in justification of his motion and speaking of the territory of France: "*Her boundaries are laid down by nature. We shall reach them on all the four quarters of the horizon, on the Rhine, on the Ocean, on the Alps. There must the boundaries of our Republic end, and no human power will be able to prevent us reaching them.*" On the 14th of February, Carnot, speaking in his turn in favour of the natural frontiers, maintained that to take them back was merely to resume territory whose dismemberment from France had been due to usurpation. From the 1st to the 30th of March a series of decrees pronounced the annexation of Belgium and the Rhinelands. Thus was formulated—and already applied—the complete theory of the revolutionary war: *war on kings for the liberation of peoples and the completion of the "French Empire."*

B. *The crisis of 1793*

1. The defeats

It was impossible for the sovereigns, beaten in 1792, to think of making peace as long as France paraded such principles and flaunted such threats in their faces. The support and encouragement which they obtained from the coming into line of England (February 1) and Spain (March 7), which made the blockade of France complete, reanimated their zeal and restored their vigour. Dumouriez's invasion of Holland was unsuccessful (beginning of March), the English having come effectively to the help of the Dutch. On the 18th of March, Demouriez lost the battle of *Neerwinden*[4] to the Austrians and a few days later he evacuated Belgium in execution of a treacherous design which he was to unmask at the beginning of April. At the same time the Prussians drove Custine from the Rhinelands (March): even Alsace was menaced and soon afterwards violated. The Piedmontese retook Nice and the Spaniards invaded Roussillon. The situation was the graver in that the Coalition were suggesting the refusal of peace to France unless she submitted to veritable dismemberment; she was to cede, according to one of the plans put forward in England, all country north of a line drawn from Abbeville to Belfort, as well as the left bank of the Rhine, Roussillon and all departments south of a line drawn from Toulouse to the Mediterranean.

2. The insurrection of Vendée

It was necessary to put the army upon a footing which would fit it to meet an attack from all frontiers at once. The Convention had already considered this and had, in February, ordained a levy of 300,000 men. But this decree when published in Vendée on the 2d of March produced a serious insurrection, covering part of Anjou, Aunis, Saintonge, Poitou and extending into Brittany.

Its causes

It was set in motion by the peasantry. The townsfolk either did not follow or were made to do so by force. Those concerned were no fonder of the Ancien Régime than their neighbours, nor were they even Royalist; but they were attached to their priests, "*the good priests,*" those who had refused the civic oath, and who exhorted them to rise against the "*persecutors of religion*"; above all they had a horror of military service, of being carried away to die far from home for a cause which was no concern of theirs; their old dislike for the militia returned in full force. The revolt, which started around the recruiting stations of Saint-Florent and Cholet, spread rapidly, there being no regular troops in the country and the departmental authorities having been taken unawares. Large bands were formed, grouped by parishes, led by their refractory priests, and armed with sporting guns, scythes, pitchforks and axes. Their first leaders were of the commonalty: *Cathelineau*, a peddler, *Stofflet*, a gamekeeper, *Forest*, formerly a valet; but nobles soon came on the scene—Bonchamps, d'Elbée, La Rochejacquelein, Lescure, Charette—and gave the movement a royalist trend which it did not at first possess. They imposed an elementary organisation on these bands and made them into what they called the *Catholic and Royal army.*

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[4] In Belgium, about fifty kilometres from Liège.

Its extension

Its leaders

Advantages of the insurgents

This, composed of men of frenzied enthusiasm and of indomitable courage, had nothing about it of a regular army and was incapable of holding its own against experienced and well-led troops, but it was singularly favoured by the nature of the country in which it operated. Even at that day the land was split up into multitudinous fields; every field was surrounded with hedges grown high and thick, bordered with ditches, full of undergrowth and mud; the roads, narrow, winding, with steep banks, inaccessible for the most part to cavalry and guns, were well fitted for ambuscades and for a partisan war, murderous to an adversary, who, ignorant of the "bottlenecks," narrow passages hidden at the bottom of hedges, ventured into the inextricable maze of copses, ravines and quagmires. Was he decidedly the stronger? The Vendean troops, "*disappearing like water into the ground,*" would slip away by all the loopholes known to themselves alone, escape his grasp, and reassemble a little farther on. "The Catholic army," moreover, never remained united for more than a few weeks or even days. Its immediate objective attained, it would disperse: the peasants concealed their guns and munitions, and on a word rapidly passed round from village to village, they would concentrate afresh, bringing their rations with them. Between expeditions, how was it possible to catch and destroy their forces?

First insufficiency of repression

Their leaders naturally did their best to induce Brittany to rise and make common cause with the English and the emigrants. It was this that made them dangerous, this and the persistent encouragement given by their example to every scheme of the refractory priests. The Convention left the conflagration to smoulder and spread because it could not afford to despatch to Vendée, in the middle of 1793, the number of competent troops and leaders necessary for its extinction.[5] The insurgents became encouraged by success, and the revolt became a subject of the deepest anxiety to the Committee of Public Safety; "*It is,*" said Barère at the Convention on the 1st of October, "*a political cancer which is eating into the heart of France.*" Moreover, under the Girondin *federalism*, set in movement after the 2d of June, royalist enterprises were initiated in Normandy, Lyons, Toulon, Marseilles and other places.

3. The Girondin federalism

C. *The recovery*

The situation, however, so grave in August, 1793, had changed for the better by the end of the year. The invasion had been checked on all frontiers and two notable victories, that of Houchard at *Hondschoote* (September 6-8) and that of Jourdan at *Wattignies* (October 16) had freed that frontier of the North which was most dangerously menaced of all. The "Catholic and Royal army," after a few brilliant successes, had been dispersed (October) if not destroyed. In November it had failed in an attempt to raise Brittany and to lay hands on a seaport, Granville or Saint-Malo; severely beaten at Le

[5] General Biron wrote to the Committee of Public Safety on the 31st of May: The rebels "*own their strength and their existence entirely to the appalling confusion which has not ceased to accompany the incoherent and insufficient measures which have always been taken piecemeal against them.*" This was true. Hesitating methods, disputes between the republican leaders, want of discipline in the troops were long in favour of the Vendéens.

Mans and crushed at Savenay, on the Loire (December 23), it was now virtually out of the field. At the same time the risings provoked by the Girondins had been put down.

The cause of this turn of fortune is, in the first place, to be sought in the lack of agreement among the Allies: the Prussians had done nothing after the recapture of Mayence; the Austrians and the English had thought mainly of their individual interests and of securing pledges in view of the eventual partition of the Republic. But, in addition, the Convention had willed and achieved a magnificent effort: it had sworn to make no peace with any enemy in occupation of French territory; it had voted for the levy in mass, for the general requisition of army supplies, had pushed on with savage energy the equipment of new troops, had been pitiless in punishment of incapable, timid or unlucky generals. The year 1794 was fortunate on the whole. The victory of *Fleurus*,[6] won by Jourdan on the 25th of June, decided the fate of Belgium and of Holland, conquered by Pichegru, and that of the left bank of the Rhine, captured by Jourdan again. In the Alps the Piedmontese had been driven back to their own country. In the Pyrenees, Spain had been cut into at both ends of the chain. Catalonia and the Basque country were in the hands of the French.

The treaties of 1795

Prussia had now for some time allowed it to be understood that she would willingly make peace. The Allies, their hope of immediate profits having vanished, lost all their ardour: England alone maintained hers because she could not reconcile herself to the occupation of Antwerp by France, and Austria also because she believed in her own strength and thought that she might still recover the advantage, and obtain better terms than by admitting defeat.

In coming to terms, a lead was given by the emperor's own brother, the Grand Duke of Tuscany (February 9, 1795); Prussia followed and signed at Basel (April 5) a treaty by which she implicitly accepted the extension of France to the Rhine. The next to treat were the United Provinces (May 16), who ceded Dutch Flanders, paid a heavy war indemnity and made an alliance with the Republic. Finally Spain signed at Basel (July 4) a treaty concluding peace with the pre-war frontier and the cession of Santo Domingo to France.

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[6] Province of Hainault, arrondissement of Charleroi.

The Coalition, though uncrushed, was crumbling; France fought on, no longer for life and liberty, but for a policy—*the attainment of her natural frontiers*—to which her revolutionary propaganda had now become secondary.

IV

The victory of France (1795-1803)

A. *The struggle against Austria* (1795-1797)

To oblige Austria to capitulate, war must be carried into the two countries where her power could best be attacked at its foundations: Germany and Italy. Carnot devised a plan of campaign to this end; two armies were to invade Germany, with a third in Italy to create a diversion. Bonaparte made this secondary operation the principal one of the war, so that, brilliant as were the manoeuvres of Moreau (who had replaced Pichegru) and of Hoche (who had succeeded Jourdan) in Germany, it was in Italy that the Austrians met with the defeats which brought them to terms. After having obliged the Piedmontese to conclude peace (treaty of *Cherasco*, April 28 and of *Paris*, May 18) Bonaparte, by a wonderful series of tactical marches and decisive victories (at Lodi, Castiglione, Arcole, Rivoli, Mantua, and on the Piave and the Tagliamento) shattered five Austrian armies in succession. He marched on Vienna, but so rashly as to put himself in a position of some peril, and accordingly made an offer of peace (April 3). Hoche and Moreau were then beginning the invasion of Germany; Austria took alarm and negotiated.

The campaign of Italy

The treaty of Campo-Formio (October, 1797)

The *preliminaries of Leoben* (April 18) were developed into the *treaty of Campo-Formio* (October 17, 1797); the terms accorded with the personal political ideas of Bonaparte, which were very different from those of the Directory. The spirit of the Revolution finds no place in these transactions; they consist of dispossessions, exchanges and annexations altogether in the eighteenth century political manner. Austria ceded her possessions on the left bank of the Rhine to France, but received compensations in Bavaria; she accepted the creation of two States in Italy which were extensions of the French Republic: the *Ligurian Republic* (Genoa) and the *Cisalpine Republic* (Milan); she consented to the occupation of the Ionian islands by France, but she received Venice and its territory; and she stipulated that the German princes on the left bank of the Rhine, who were now dispossessed, should receive "*suitable indemnities*" in Germany. A subsequent Congress was finally to adjust the whole.

B. *The struggle with England*

1. Before 1798

Not much confidence could be placed in a peace thus concluded in a spirit of sordid cupidity and mere empiricism of the moment; but still it left France only England to deal with. The struggle with that power had till then not been fortunate. Its navy, infinitely superior to that of the Republic, in spite of the reorganisation of the latter by Jeanbon-Saint-André, dominated the sea. Corsica, Pondicherry, Tobago had fallen into English hands; the Stadthouder of Holland, expelled from his own country, had delivered the Cape of Ceylon to England. The Directory, however, could not pardon her for her association with the Royalists, for provoking and subsidising their plots. The idea of a landing in the island had been long in the air. It was revived after the treaty of Campo-Formio; but its difficulties were enormous. Bonaparte, just back from an inspection of the coasts (February, 1798), declared it impossible.

The plan of Bonaparte

He obtained the adoption of a plan he had in mind, that of indirect action; by which France, keeping the English uneasy by a threat to Ireland, always impatient under their domination, should then lay hands upon Egypt as a base of operations for the establishment of the commercial preponderance of France in the Levant, and also a base for an attack on English India, and for giving support to Tippoo Sahib, the Sultan of Mysore. He estimated the time needed for the expedition at not more than six months, at the end of which time the indecisions and incertitudes of the European situation would doubtless be cleared up.

2. The expedition of Egypt

The "Army of the East," regarded as *the left wing of the army* against England, was concentrated as secretly as possible at Toulon, Genoa and Cività-Vecchia; it compromised 38,000 men conveyed by 335 ships, when Bonaparte embarked at Toulon (May 19, 1798). He deceived Nelson as to his route, surprised Malta which capitulated (June 12) and, favoured by unheard-of good fortune, landed before Alexandria on the 1st of July; the town was taken by an energetic assault on the following day.

Defeat of the Mamelukes

Egypt, in theory, belonged to Turkey but, in fact, was under the domination of the *Mamelukes*, a military aristocracy: about 10,000 horsemen commanded by about twenty *beys*, nominal subjects of the sultan. They formed the principal defending force. Their defeat in sight of *the Pyramids* (July 21) gave Bonaparte Cairo. Unfortunately Nelson, at last apprised of the general's intentions, arrived in his turn before Aboukir where, by Bonaparte's orders, the fleet had remained; he destroyed it on the 1st and 2d of August, thus shutting up the French army in Egypt.

Aboukir

The organisation of Egypt

Bonaparte, at first, did his best to console himself; he reflected that, in antiquity, this country had fed the whole world, and had made itself the centre of a magnificent civilisation. He undertook its exploration and organisation. He had brought some scholars and archeologists with him, with whom he formed the *Institute of Egypt* (August 22), whose researches laid the foundations of Egyptology. He made advances to the

Moslems and began the organisation of the whole country upon European lines. His success indeed was but moderate; he was compelled to put down with severity a revolt in Cairo, where the Mamelukes, who had taken refuge in Syria, called on the people to rise in the name of the sultan.

The expedition of Syria

They even prepared an expedition for the reconquest of Egypt. Bonaparte forestalled them, invaded Syria (February, 1799), won some brilliant successes, but failed to capture *Saint-Jean d'Acre*, for want of siege material, or to prevent the plague from ravaging his army. He returned to Egypt just in time to drive into the sea a Turkish army, landed there by the English (July 25).

The flight of Bonaparte

The danger had been removed for the moment, but it could not fail to return; failure stared him in the face. Moreover, the personal ambition of Napoleon called for his return to France. This was a hazardous undertaking, but he ventured and succeeded. Leaving Kléber in command of the army, he embarked secretly on the 22d of August on a frigate which had escaped the disaster of Aboukir, and he landed at Fréjus on the 9th of October. The new leader did all that could be done, held his own against Turks and English, but was assassinated by a fanatic (June 20, 1800), and Menou, his successor, quite incompetent, had soon to capitulate (August 30, 1801). Meanwhile Tippoo Sahib had been vanquished and slain (May 4, 1799).

The end of the enterprise

3. The designs upon Ireland

The designs of the Directory upon Ireland had not succeeded. First Hoche, who inspired them, died (September, 1797). Secondly the Dutch navy, which should have collaborated and assisted, had been wiped out at the battle of *Camperdown* (October 11, 1797). Further Bonaparte did not, at the end of six months, bring back from Egypt a victorious army which was needed if the operation was to be sufficiently extensive. Finally the Irish, whose insurrection was to be the signal for the departure of the troops, rose sooner than had been agreed and before the expedition was ready.

The Directory contented itself with sending General Humbert to Ireland with about 1000 soldiers (August, 1798). He won some initial successes but, confronted with superior numbers, was soon obliged to lay down his arms (September 8). *Thus neither the attempts made by direct attack nor by indirect threats had succeeded in bringing England to terms.*

C. *The Second Coalition*

The policy of the Directory after 1797

For the rest, at the moment when Bonaparte was relinquishing his Egyptian dream, France was subjected to a fresh and formidable ordeal. The Directory, having acquired a taste for conquest, more or less discreetly disguised, by the formation of the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics, had adopted a deliberate policy of intervention all round and had constituted a set of *sister republics* in Holland, Switzerland, Rome, Naples, greatly to the disturbance of Austria. The tsar, Paul I, the self-constituted Protector of the Knights of Malta, had begun to hold France in horror. An enormous wave of hatred for "the Jacobins" swept over the courts of Vienna, Saint Petersburg, London and even Berlin, though the King of Prussia had decided not to depart from neutrality. A series of treaties, for the most part concluded in December, 1798, and January, 1799, united England, Turkey, Naples and Russia. Austria made no positive alliance except with Naples, but took part in the Coalition and, on the 12th of March, 1799, the Directory declared war on the emperor, King of Hungary and Bohemia. The Congress, which was to settle the questions reserved by the treaty of Campo-Formio, had opened at Rastadt in December, 1797; it did not end until the 28th of April, 1799, long after the commencement of hostilities. Directly the three plenipotentiaries left the town, they were attacked by Austrian Hussars and two of them killed. Austria, it appeared, regarded France as outside the law of nations.

Formation of the Coalition

This new war, in which the Russians of Souvarof participated with their characteristic intrepid and brutal energy, at first, from March to September, 1799, went ill indeed for

France. The English landed in Holland, Jourdan was beaten in Germany and thrown back on the Rhine; all Italy was lost. But these successes of the Allies did not last. Brune forced the English to evacuate Holland, the Austrians did not follow up their advantages on the Rhine; Masséna and Lecourbe, round Zurich and in the valley of the Reuss, prevented the junction of the Austrians with the Russians. The tsar, highly disappointed with the defeat of Souvarof in Switzerland and seeing that Austria had made use of the Russian troops merely to reconquer Italy for herself, actually left the Coalition. *Bonaparte, on his arrival from Egypt, had no need to save France. It was already done.*

1. The period of disasters (March-September, 1799)

2. The recovery

Yet a task worthy of his talents still remained: to defeat Austria and recover Italy. A double campaign conducted by himself in Italy and by Moreau in Germany attained this end. The battle of *Marengo* (June 14, 1800) and that of *Hohenlinden* (December 3) laid Austria open to invasion and induced her to give way. She accepted, by the *treaty of Lunéville* (February 9, 1801), the re-establishment, with clearer definition, of the situation determined by the treaty of Campo-Formio: the session to France of the left bank of the Rhine and of the hegemony of Italy. Bonaparte was master and had spoken as such.

The defeat of Austria

England isolated, with the whole weight of the war on her shoulders, resolved to make terms, and, in March, 1801, offered to negotiate. At that time Egypt had not been lost and could have been utilised as a hostage or a basis for a bargain. Bonaparte, carried away by his imagination, desired terms of peace which, effecting something like a partition of the maritime world, should leave the Mediterranean in his hands. Negotiations and bargainings dragged on. Meanwhile Menou capitulated and the *treaty of Amiens* (March 5, 1802), was far less advantageous than it might have been. France gave up Malta, Egypt, the Ionian islands and thus lost her hope of dominating the Mediterranean; *England agreed to accept, as*

The peace with England

a whole, the continental situation as created by France, and restored all French colonies taken by her since 1793. The peace was at bottom hardly sincere; each of the contracting parties signed it with regrets for the concessions it cost them. But it enabled the First Consul, as was said, to "*shut the temple of Janus*" which in ancient Rome must have stood open as long as the Republic was at war: *peace had been established all round.*

Conclusion

The Revolution had proved victorious in the end because it was inevitable; it had on its side a *Nation* and a *vigorous patriotism* too strong as against the mere *governments* and *political artifices typical of the Ancien Régime.* At first it had organised war for national defence, next it had dreamt of a war of propaganda, in the cause of ideas and principles, then it had revived the old conception of natural frontiers, and had realised the aspirations of the boldest diplomats of the old stock. It had carried France to the boundaries of Caesar's Gaul, or nearly so. Finally, under the impulse of Bonaparte, it had begun to yield to the spell of conquest inadvisedly undertaken and intervention whose only motives were "*prestige and imperialism,*" as we say today. In 1802 there was still time for France to halt on this perilous path; a prudent and resolutely pacific policy might undoubtedly have induced Europe and even England to accept the final consolidation of France, a thing then possible, since so far no irreconcilable German or Belgian patriotism had to be reckoned with as obstacles to her highly advantageous annexations in the North and East. Unfortunately the war had raised Napoleon Bonaparte to power and he was neither pacific nor prudent.

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CHAPTER XXXIII

FROM THE EMPIRF TO THE RESTORATION (1804-1815)

I

Napoleon

THE imperial régime bears throughout the stamp of Napoleon, his person, his character and his political ideas: his person becomes the centre of all public life, his character dominates and conducts, or at least seeks to conduct, every enterprise of any importance; his ideas become the essential principles of government.

A. *The person of Napoleon*

His birth and his family

Napoleon was born at Ajaccio in Corsica, on the 15th of August, 1769. His father, Charles Marie de Bonaparte, a small noble in straitened circumstances, whose family, of Italian origin, had first set foot in the island at the beginning of the sixteenth century, had thirteen children by Laetitia Ramolino. Eight only survived beyond infancy;[1] Napoleon was the second. He spent his early youth in his tiny fatherland, which, recently subjected to France, was still in a state of disturbance and ineradicable anarchy. Examples were constantly before his eyes, which could not fail to imbue him with contempt for all law that has not force on its side, and reciprocally, to convince him that force is everything; that any idea of morality, scruples of conscience, fidelity to principle, are things of little consequence.

His education

His family gained him the privilege of education, at the king's expense, in a military school and, in April, 1779, he entered the preparatory school of Brienne. He could hardly speak French and did not feel in the least like a Frenchman; he regretted that Corsica had lost her independence and he said to one of his fellow-pupils, Bourrienne, who tells us the story: "*I will do all the harm that I can to your Frenchmen.*" From Brienne, he passed, in October, 1784, to the military school of Paris, where he remained for a year. Perspicacious observers already discerned a strong personality under a taciturn exterior and the diligence of a conscientious pupil. His professor of history, in his report on him at the military school, wrote: "*Corsican by nation and by character, he will go far if circumstances are in his favour.*"

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[1] These are, in the order of their birth: Joseph, Napoléon, Lucien, Elise, Pauline, Caroline, Louis, Jérôme. Cardinal Fesch, who will be mentioned later as an uncle of Napoléon, was the half-brother of his mother. Charles Bonaparte died young, at thirty-nine years of age, in 1785.

B. *His career*

Lieutenant of artillery

On leaving the school he was appointed lieutenant of the regiment of artillery of La Fère, then garrisoned at Valence (1785). Artillery and engineers were at that time considered as the inferior *arms* in the army; but to an officer without means or influence advancement was easier there than in the cavalry or infantry. A complete stranger to the loyalism on which was founded the patriotism of the young nobles, his school-fellows, without any true religious faith, capable in a "parallel" which he composed to relieve the tedium of garrison life of placing Apollonius of Tyana, a charlatan of the first century of our era, above Jesus Christ himself, it was easy for him to join the Revolution. He echoed, without qualms and without conviction, its current phrases unmoved by the passion which they roused in souls more sincere. His circumstances being extremely narrow, he was anxious to make money; for some time he even left the army to try his fortune in Corsica by the procedure ordinarily there adopted. He failed and returned to the service. His compatriot Salicetti recommended him to Robespierre. He was chief of battalion at the time of the siege of Toulon, where he distinguished himself and won the rank of general of brigade. He was not yet really attached to any party but passed for a friend of Robespierre; thus he was arrested on the 9th Thermidor and kept for a few days in prison at Antibes (August 6-20). If he had then been taken to Paris it is possible that

The adopted child of the Revolution

The protégé of Robespierre

his career, with his life, would have ended on the platform of the guillotine. He sought support in other influential quarters and denied Robespierre, saying: "*I believed him pure, but had he been my father I would myself have stabbed him if he aspired to tyranny.*" He finally cleared himself and shortly afterwards received a command in the Army of the West, and there, as he thought, was virtually buried. He made his escape by obtaining a post in the topographical section of the Ministry of War.

The protégé of Barras

It was to this circumstance that he owed his presence in Paris at the moment of the 13th Vendémiaire. Barras, who knew him, employed him to put down the insurrection. He was so satisfied with his services that, having some weeks later become Director, he made him a magnificent recompense by arranging for his marriage with Joséphine, widow to General de Beauharnais, of doubtful reputation, indeed, but beautiful and wealthy, and gave him on his own account, as a wedding-present, the appointment of general-in-chief to the Army of Italy (March 9, 1796).

The birth of his great ambition

It was during the brilliant campaign of 1796-1797 that Bonaparte, in his own words, felt kindled within him "*the first spark of high ambition.*" Up till then any ambition he had cherished had been vague, a desire *to succeed*, ardent indeed, but not yet attached to any object worthy of his powers. The idea now occurred to him that he might well be able, "*after all, to become a leading actor on our political stage.*" He became interested in France from the moment when he saw and hoped that he might make her useful to himself.

The political general

Henceforward he behaves and demeans himself as a political general does, doing in all things as he sees fit, if needful, against the instructions of the Directory, diligent, above all things, to gratify his troops and to keep himself "*the centre of everything,*" to make himself friends in Paris among the adversaries of the new régime. He takes particular pains to delude Siéyès, to make him think him likely to be *the right hand,* which that chamber theorist needed for the realisation of his

"Constitutional" dreams. He has the soul of a condottiere of the fifteenth century: no creed of any kind, no principle, no consideration will bring him to a stop and already he cynically formulates his political programme: "*No Republic: a chief with glory and playthings for his people!*"

The ripening of *the pear*

On his return from Italy (December, 1797) he did not, however, think that the time was ripe for him to risk, against the Directory, the stroke of force which he was contemplating. He considered that "*the pear was not ripe,*" that it would take about two years for the government to become so thoroughly discredited that the operation would be easy, and that meanwhile what most mattered was to add to his own glory. To this end he arranged for the Egyptian campaign. His argument in favour of his leaving was lucid: the policy of the Directory was sure to provoke a new Coalition; if it turned out badly for France it would precipitate the fall of an ill advised and unfortunate government; he would then return, like a god from the car, for the *plucking of the pear;* if, on the contrary, the French armies remained victorious, if the Directory thus became safe in the saddle, or if some other general profited by the opportunity, he himself would be free to seek another occasion. He would remain in the East, the classic land of great enterprises, and there make a place for himself. Already he saw himself a prophet traversing those lands of wonder "*mounted on a white she-camel and preaching a new Alcoran!*"

The opportunity

It was defeat which he was to meet with in Egypt, but defeat, too, was the first lot of the armies of the Directory in Europe. He learned of it from the newspapers which the English allowed to reach him, probably in order to discourage him. Then by a deed of unheard audacity he escaped from Egypt, abandoning his army, avoiding the English cruisers by a miracle and reached France. He ran a great risk, since, meanwhile, France, thanks to Brune, to Masséna, to Lecourbe, had finally obtained the advantage and he found nothing left for him to save. On the other hand, isolated from his troops, in the awkward position of a leader who has deserted his post and left his army face to face with disaster, a formidable reckoning with the public authorities might have awaited him. His political friends, those who had need of him, and, above all, the prestige of his glory, which the expedition to Egypt, of which little was yet really known, had raised to a still higher point, protected him from a vacillating and divided government. Siéyès and Roger-Ducos were in accord with him, Barras manoeuvred for position; Moulin and Gohier lacked authority. For these reasons, instead of the court-martial which he deserved, he received the military command of Paris which meant ultimately the triumph of the 18th Brumaire, the Consulate and the Empire.

The triumph

This realisation of his dream, though undoubtedly not exceeding his hopes, had been singularly favoured by circumstances, by strange complicities, by unexpected relinquishments. Napoleon derived from his success a complete contempt for men and an unbounded confidence in himself and his fortune.

C. *The character of Napoleon*

Impression made on those whom he met

It is certain that he possessed the gift and the instinct for command to an extraordinary degree. His mere presence had on all whom he met an effect like *fascination*. Vandamme, one of his generals, once blurted this out in the slang of a soldier: "*This devil of a man fascinates me somehow, I can't make out why. What it comes to is this, that I, who fear neither God nor devil, cannot approach him without shivering with fright; if he told me to, I should wriggle through the eye of a needle, to jump afterwards into a fire.*" Madame de Staël, the daughter of Necker, mentally of very different quality from Vandamme, and capable of analysing her impressions,[2] noted "*the singular*

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[2] It is worth while to read in her "*Considérations sur la Révolution française* (part iii, ch. xxvi, and part iv, ch. xviii), the few pages which she has devoted to the psychology of Napoleon; nothing more penetrating has been written upon him.

effect of his presence on nearly all who come near him," the conviction enforced upon all that he was like no one else, that "*his character could not be described in the words of which we commonly avail ourselves,*" that the motives which sway ordinary men were foreign to his mind. He was not unaware that his look and manner had an extraordinary influence upon men; this he wielded with much art, feigning now anger, now geniality, or severity or familiar indulgence, now a tragedian, now a comedian, and passing from one attitude to another with highly disconcerting rapidity. He certainly did his utmost to raise into a miraculous legend a reality which, human and imperfect as it was, was not the less wonderful.

Power of work and concentration

He was, like everyone else, liable to come to the end of his strength and to fall into fatigue and inattention, but only after much longer effort than with most men, and at any rate up till the age—verging on the forties—when corpulence began to creep over him, and his health to show signs of impairment, he kept a power of work and capacity for application which was absolutely abnormal. He amazed and overworked the Council of State during the first part of the Consulate; he would keep it at work from ten at night to five in the morning or from nine in the morning to five in the evening, with one adjournment of a quarter of an hour! Armed with a prodigious memory at once inexhaustible, faithful and prompt, he stored up in his brain a surprising amount of knowledge and of practical information which gave him an efficiency of the first order in most questions concerning government and administration, civil and military alike. He had a horror of general ideas—of *ideology,* as he used to say—and of absolute principles, but for *facts* and for precise details his avidity was insatiable and enabled him at times to give *displays* which produced in his entourage the impression that there was nothing which escaped his eye. Yet it was the case that a few of his ministers (for instance, Fouché in the Police, and Portalis in the Public Wor-

Memory and efficiency

ship) became so bold as to hide a good deal from him and to contravene his orders without his discovering that they had done so.[3] He was less universal than he thought and above all wished to be thought; few men, however, have been so much so as he.

His imagination

His one disproportionate quality was his imagination, which was of an enormity approaching insanity. It has been justly said that he undertook more than he achieved and imagined far more than he undertook. He was the most formidable *constructor of the future* in all recorded history. He was well aware of this imperious need of his nature and said one day, "*I never live less than two years ahead.*"

His temperament

His fits of anger, often assumed, are even more often genuine. He becomes a madman, completely abandoning himself to the fury that seizes him, he breaks any object within his reach, physically assaults this man or that, lets himself go in floods of the grossest language, for he was badly brought up; he is quite without tact, and good taste and social decorum are outside his ken altogether. Sometimes he is emotional and gives way to floods of tears. Above all he is *égoïste* to the point of monstrosity. One day when Joséphine, having caught him in conjugal infidelity, deservedly reproached him, he answered, "*I have the right to answer your complaints by my eternal 'Moi!'* " This might have been his motto in all things. He refers everything to himself, absorbs everything, and tramples all resistance under his feet. "*I am apart from the world,*" he proclaims, "*I accept conditions from no man.*"

His psychological blind spot

For the rest, he had no belief in the altruism or the disinterestedness of any man whatever, thus making a psychological mistake which more than once did him much harm even in politics. He is too strongly persuaded that he can do as he pleases with men's consciences by favours, money, titles and distinctions. "*I have lost all faith in Rousseau since I have seen the East,*" he once said: "*The natural man is a dog.*" His opinion of civilised man was not much better and indeed the servile compliance which he met on all sides as soon as he had become strong, naturally confirmed his opinion. In accordance, "*all his methods of governing men were taken from among those which tend to degrade them*" (Madame de Rémusat). Nearly all his miscalculations arise from the excesses of his imagination and from this blind spot in his psychology.

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[3] It is worthy of note that the men who did him most harm and indeed actually betrayed him came from his entourage, such as Fouché, Talleyrand, Bernadotte. They had discovered his weaknesses and had freed themselves from his hypnotic influence.

His ambition

He is possessed and driven by a frightful ambition, instinctive and innate, exacerbated by the hardships of his youth; it is encouraged by circumstances, and, authenticated by success, it becomes so bound up with his whole intellectual being that he is unconscious of it. "*As for me,*" he said, "*I have no ambition . . . or, if I have, it is natural, so innate, so embedded in my very life that it is like the blood which runs in my veins or the air which I breathe*" (Roederer). Taine, in a famous study of his character, has endeavoured to show that he brought into the France of the end of the eighteenth century the aptitudes, mentality, temperament, appetites of one of the great Italian condottieri of the fifteenth century. There is much truth in this view. This portentous genius, insurgent, overwhelming, without measure and without grace, a rebel to all human sentiments, principles and formulas, is no child of our eighteenth century now ending. It is far more closely related—though the comparison should not be pressed—to that of Michael Angelo, a Leonardo da Vinci, a Benvenuto Cellini, or indeed a Caesar Borgia.

D. *The political ideas of Napoleon*

Madame de Rémusat gives us one of his utterances which is instructive and runs as follows: "*Liberty is the need of a class which is small and privileged by nature, of those who have* *abilities greater than ordinary. Thus it can be restricted with impunity; equality, on the contrary, is pleasing to the multitude.*" Little as was his love for principles, these at any rate he practised: no liberty whatsoever; equality for all, but for each a hope, if he did acceptable service and made himself agreeable, to escape from the ruck and rise above it. His entourage is under his thumb; his ministers are mere menials; he said he would have no use for them "*if they had not a certain mediocrity of character or spirit.*" The State is so organised throughout as to secure his untrammelled domination. It is his doctrine that all decision must be reserved to authority; that good can come only from above, while above *there is only himself*. Everything is so arranged in the system which he imposes upon France that no scintilla of resistance, opposition, criticism shall have the means, I do not say to give him trouble, but even to be outwardly manifested or expressed.

II

The régime

A. *The three powers*

1. The *executive*

2. The *legislative*

The *executive power* appertains entirely to the emperor, the incarnation of the sovereign people; no executive authority can exist in the State unless instituted or delegated by him. The *legislative power* is still, in theory, entrusted to the Tribunate, to the Legislative Body and to the Senate, but all initiative and every decision lies with the emperor.

The Tribunate

Napoleon had no love for the Tribunte, which, by the very principle of its being, stood for dissent and criticism. He began by weakening and ended by suppressing it in 1807. Its members were merged in the Legislative Body, which appointed Commissions for drafting laws which were to come before it.

The Legislative Body

The Constitution of the year XII already provided for *General Committees* of the *Legislative Body* in which discussion was permitted, but the deputies were still denied two essential prerogatives: the right of initiative and the right of amendment. When Napoleon expected any opposition whatever to a proposed law or when speed was imperative, he disregarded the Legislative Body and went straight to the Senate.

The Senate

The Senate had failed to obtain the powers which it had claimed, as essential to liberty, in its address of the 4th of May, 1804, but it had received the right to form two *Commissions*, one known as that of *individual liberty*, the other of *the liberty of the press*, their duty being to protest against any possible violations of these essential liberties (Art. 60-67 of the Constitution of the year XII). Never did either, in ten years, give one sign of life. On the other hand, under cover of *senatus-consulta*, Napoleon demanded veritable legislative decisions from the Senate which he handed to it ready-made. It is by these *senatus-consulta* that he justifies his worst illegalities. The Senate does not dare to protest; it fears that by displeasing its master it may lose his favour. For the rest, Napoleon, by instituting *Senatoreries* or donations to the senators, keeps hold of them by bribery and corruption. He has, too, the right of nominating to the Senate, up to the full membership of one hundred and twenty, citizens whom he thinks worthy, over and above the eighty members which the Assembly must regularly comprise; thus the majority is completely in his hands.

The Council of State

As for the Council of State, it has become almost entirely a supreme court for the whole field of administrative appeal. Napoleon entrusts it less and less frequently with the examination of laws which may be of political importance. He dreads the influence of competent men who are capable of clear insight into his intentions.

3. The *judiciary*

"*Justice*," says the first article of the Constitution of the year XII, "*is dealt with in the name of the emperor through the officers whom he institutes.*" Thus it is Napoleon who appoints the judges. Their independence is, in principle, guarded by a guarantee of permanence; but in October, 1807, when several years of experience had enabled the master to test their zeal and subservience, a *senatus-consultum* decided that, before instituting judges "*by irrevocable appointment*," recourse should be had to a *purge* of the judicial personnel and that in future immunity from dismissal should not be conferred until after five years' service. The *Imperial Procureurs*, who represent the government in all courts and are not irremovable, superintend and report on the magistrates to the emperor. Napoleon was anxious to do away with the *jury*, but the Council of State would not agree to give up to him more than the *jury of accusation* (which finds a true bill) and he dared not go further and abolish also the *jury of judgment* (which tries the case), against which he could have no complaint, except in so far as it contravened his principle that no decisions should be made in which he did not have a hand. Nowhere was the judicial body in a position to oppose any one of his wishes; in 1813, discontented with the verdict of a jury at Anvers, he had it broken by *senatus-consultum*, as scandalous a violation of all legal right as could well be imagined. He had a horror of avocats, "*factious contrivers of crimes and treason*," because in 1804 the Empire had received only *three votes*, among the two hundred enrolled in the bar of Paris. He said, with approximate sincerity, "*I wish any barrister could have his tongue cut out when he uses it against the government*." That the accused should be free to defend himself struck him as outrageous.

B. *Negative action on opinion*

1. The administration

The departmental administration is altogether in the hands of the Prefects, but apart from the emperor they are nothing; he appoints, too, all executive agents in the departments. The Municipal Councils of the *inferior communes* are elected by the Assembly of the cantons but only from the one hundred most highly taxed citizens: their material prosperity guarantees their opinions and behaviour. In the *superior communes of at least five thousand souls*, the Assembly of the canton does no more than *present* candidates for the Municipal Council (two for each vacancy) : the emperor makes his choice; and, moreover, the Prefect, who has the communes in tutelage, keeps a close eye on Councils and Mayors, the latter always appointed by the emperor. In short, not a single shred of public authority, however minute it may be, escapes the direct grasp of the central government. As a further precaution still, in each town of five thousand inhabitants at least, a *Commissioner of Police* keeps his eye open, in concert with the *gendarmes*, established in each canton, and with the collaboration of the clergy.[4] The bishops send in reports on the officials and are themselves under the eye of the Prefect and the police. The administration is essentially one huge agency for mutual supervision. For the rest, *the police* are the mainspring of the whole administrative machinery, and indeed of the whole Napoleonic system. Outside the Special Ministry of Police there is a police department in every ministry and the emperor himself has a personal police to keep an eye on the others. Men's minds are infected with suspicion of the *mouchard* (police-spy) which becomes one of the secret distempers of the time and one of the causes which lead to the disappearance of all public spirit.

2. The elections

The electoral system remains the same as that established by the Constitution of the year X; it is a mere piece of legerdemain to make suffrage a dead letter. The electoral bodies of the arrondissements, of the departments, once constituted, remain as they are. Any meetings of the Cantonal Assemblies —that is, of all citizens for the elections—thus become mere superfluities. They become disused but for plebiscites; *the political rights of the people, in fact, are extinct.*

3. The public liberties

The right of petition can be exercised on application to the Senatorial Commissions for Individual Liberties, and for the Liberty of the Press. On the right of association and meeting, the Constitution says nothing; on the other hand, the *penal code* of 1810 mentions them only to restrict them drastically. In principle, no meeting of more than twenty persons can, under any pretext, be held unless authorised by the government!

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[4] The oath imposed on the priests compels them to report anything which they can learn of designs against the government.

The liberty of the press

Of all liberties, that most detested by Napoleon is that of his personal enemy the press. He restricts its freedom with unremitting severity. To control and criticise is its natural function and he allowed neither criticism nor control. Its treatment by the Consulate had been draconian, and he now made it still more so. In 1805, police supervision was extended to the editors of all newspapers; in 1810, Napoleon declared the profession of journalist to be "*a public function,*" whose exercise must be regulated by the government. Consequently the censorship was officially re-established; it had, in fact, already been applied since the beginning of the Consulate. The number of printers is restricted. Each must provide himself with a licence and take an oath; no article can appear till it has been submitted to the Ministry of Police and every paper must pay the salaries of *directors,* appointed by the government, for its own strict supervision. If any one of these papers is thought to be in funds the emperor compels it to pay from its revenues pensions which he grants to this or that person; he even takes for himself some of its shares. In July, 1805, the *Journal des Débats* had to alter its name, becoming the *Journal de l'Empire,* since, concord now reigning supreme, "debate" was extinct; on this occasion the government took two-twelfths of the property of the paper! In 1811, the same paper was appropriated outright, without compensation to its owners and the same with the *Journal de Paris* because, said the decree, "*the profits of newspapers cannot be considered as property except in virtue of a concession expressly made by ourselves.*" On the 28th of December, 1811, a note published in the *Journal de l'Empire* announced that "*from the 1st of October following there will appear in Paris only four daily papers dealing with political*

The newspapers

news; namely, the Moniteur, the Journal de l'Empire, the Gazette de France and the Journal de Paris." Even *four* was more than Napoleon liked, and he thought in 1805 of retaining *one* only, the *Moniteur*, to be produced entirely in the ministerial offices and kept under his immediate personal control. He did not go quite so far as this, but he kept the survivors perpetually under threat of suppression: one inadvertence, one word open to misconstruction, might result in the confiscation of the number containing it.[5] This was the position of the Parisian press; that of the provinces had to confine itself to the recording of official communications, formal announcements, advertisements and a few "sundry happenings." Whatever the situation might have been, the Senatorial Commission for the Liberty of the Press would most probably have made no effort to defend journalistic independence, but as it was, it was powerless to do so, the Constitution of the year XII having taken the precaution of excluding journalism from its competency: "*Its jurisdiction does not in any respect include works which are printed and distributed by subscription and at periodic dates.*"

Books and the theatre

Other works as well, such as books, were hardly less closely tied down: none could be offered for sale till it had passed the scrutiny of the censor, obtained the imprimatur of the director-general of the library, and received the *laissez-passer* (permit) of the Minister of Police. Compositions for the theatre were, of course, similarly censored, and none, including even the classic tragedies, escaped correction in any place where the text could be twisted as involving an allusion, a libel or a joke distasteful to the government.

4. Thought

Here the régime descends to its lowest depths; its obvious intention is to kill all thought. What remains is to be shaped into moulds made by the government. Any thought, any reflection upon anything trenching upon politics—and anything whatever in the judgment of Napoleon might be made out to do so—is *ideology* and ideology is of all things to be detested.[6] To the Emperor even the past was his property and history *a matter for the State*, to be regulated by the government. With this in view, he formed the extravagant design of *ordering a history of France*, which was to be final, and even laid down its table of contents. Its main object was to represent the Ancien Régime "*in such a manner that a breath of relief is drawn on reaching an epoch which enjoys the benefits of the unity of laws, administration and territory.*" It is sad that so great a work should never have seen the light!

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[5] Journalists, however, sometimes succeeded by dint of ingenuity in saying something. The following is an amusing instance: in a number of the *Journal de l'Empire* at the end of 1808, two paragraphs were to be seen side by side. "*A portion of the collection of antique statues from the villa Borghese has arrived at Grenoble.*" "*At this moment a translation is being printed of the speech of Cicero against the thefts of Verres, entitled 'the Statues.'*"

The consequences of this tyranny

The despot, in his extravagant and almost pathological passion for domination, did not see that in thus muzzling public opinion, *he suppressed that which was in his favour as well as that which was against him.* A day was to come when he would need its assistance, when he would look for it in vain. It had become impotent to assert itself, after its long starvation of all knowledge that could give it energy; it had forgotten how to express itself, for the means of doing so had been lost to it too long. Napoleon was to find himself alone, faced with an apathetic people and a rancorous minority ready to avenge the abuses of power and the humiliations which he had inflicted on it.

C. *Positive action upon opinion*

Seeing clearly that drastic restriction had this disadvantage, yet being unwilling at any cost to do without it, he had tried his utmost to fashion, direct and fix the very opinion which he had diligently deprived of every means by which it could control, criticise and oppose. To fix opinion, as well attempt to arrest life itself! In clinging to this illusion, Napoleon revealed himself the true heir of those theorists who, in the days of his youth, argued in the absolute upon Man, Nature and Truth; he thought that in everything was a perfection of its own which, once attained, left nothing to be done but to conserve it. Was not perfection in the political and governmental field now attained by the imperial régime? Then the imperial régime should be imposed like a revelation of truth from on high. To attain this end he trusted in two principal means: the education of youth and the influence of religion.

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[6] The *Class* (or as we call it the *Academy*) *of moral and political sciences*, of the Institute was suppressed: it was the sanctuary of *ideology!*

1. Public education. The aim of Napoleon

"*In the establishment of an educational body,*" he said to the Council of State on the 11th of March, 1806, "*my principal aim is to have a means of directing political and moral opinion.*" And again, "*this body must be so constituted as to provide notes upon every child from the age of nine years upwards.*" Logic demanded, in these conditions, that the State should reserve to itself *the monopoly of education.* For this reason, having harried and hampered the free schools in every possible way for several years, Napoleon gave them their deathblow by the decree of the 7th of March, 1808: "*Public education in the Empire is exclusively entrusted to the University.*[7] *No school, no educational establishment whatever . . . can be formed outside the Imperial University and without the authorisation of its head.*" The first of these provisions could not, indeed, be literally applied, for the State was not yet in a position to undertake the task which it thus laid on itself; but such free schools as remained were driven to model their teaching and internal organisation upon those of the *lycées* and *collèges* of the State, in competition with which they would inevitably disappear as redundant superfluities, when and as the latter were established and organised.

The monopoly of education

Primary education

The Emperor, as well as the Consul and for the same reason, had much concern for primary education. He was not one to hold with the enlightenment of the people. Any communes which desired to treat themselves to the luxury of a school must bear the whole cost and arrange for its organisation, as a matter of course under government supervision. Any education there given must be strictly confined to reading, writing and arithmetic, with the addition of "*the Catechism adopted for the Empire.*" In 1812, the budget provided 25,000 francs to help the "Frères Ignorantins" in recruiting. Napoleon prized them as teachers because at that time their vows prohibited them from exceeding the modest requirements to whose limits he confined the zeal of his schoolmasters. This small sum, out of which those who were entitled to it only handled 4500 francs, represents the whole contribution of the Napoleonic State to primary education!

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[7] The word was taken in a new sense and signified the "*State schools of all grades,*" as a whole.

Higher education

Higher education did not indeed interest him much more, or, if it be preferred, did not alarm him any less, since he everywhere dreaded as the worst of evils any speculation or activity of mind which did not fit into his official framework. He knew well enough that science is liberty or is nothing; he was willing that it should be nothing. Under his rule it would have died out if the Museum and the College of France, institutions whose lack of conspicuous influence saved them from his redoubtable attention, had not afforded it a last refuge. As to the faculties—law, medicine, science, letters—*they turned out practitioners:* judges, notaries, officials, doctors, professors, but *not men of learning.* The higher culture almost completely disappeared; the generation educated under the auspices of the Empire was completely ignorant of all which is not purely formal or directly practical.

Secondary education

In passing the law of the 10th of May, 1806, which founded the Imperial University and the decrees of 1808, which organised it, the Emperor had secondary education mainly in view, as had the First Consul a few years before; this is the education of the *directing classes,* intended to operate within the framework of the *lycées* and *collèges,* which, from 1802 onwards, had replaced the secondary schools (*Central Schools*) of the Convention. He endeavoured to lay the foundations of this education by creating from top to bottom a staff of teachers for its service. "*I desire*," he said, "*a corporation, because a corporation does not die*," and can so preserve fixed principles "*as to bring up successive generations in the same manner and to inspire youth with a spirit and opinions in conformity with the new laws of the Empire.*" This staff of educationalists "*whose feet . . . are under the benches of the colleges and its head in the Senate*" is to be recruited by voluntary engagement for three, six or nine years; it is subjected to a strict discipline, smacking strongly of the barracks and must yield a military obedience to the orders given it by the University authorities; it is an enormous official machine for education.

The educational staff

The institution of the *Normal School* (March 17, 1808)—an adaptation of a creation of the Convention—was in due logical sequence with this system: to cut out the masters to his pattern was at least as important as to put his stamp on the pupils. In 1813 a circular was to announce that: "*The Normal School is henceforward the sole opening to a career in public education.*" It has no concern with the cultivation of minds, the development of aptitudes, the production of distinguished professors. Its only end is to furnish the State, year by year, with the number of "teachers" which it may need.

The Normal School

The courses are limited to the three classical languages: French, Latin, Greek; to mathematics; to some elements of the physical and natural sciences. In the highest class, known as that of *philosophy*, there are added the principles of logic, metaphysics and ethics in accordance with "*the precepts of the Catholic religion.*" There is no history and no geography. As a whole, the education given is in the main largely literary; only some young people in the class known as *higher mathematics* receive anything like serious scientific training, up to the

Educational courses

standard necessary for engineers and artillery officers. The essence of the whole course may be found in the following declaration: "*All the schools of the University shall take, as the basis of their education, loyalty to the Emperor and to the Imperial monarchy, the depositary of the happiness of the people; to the Napoleonic dynasty, the preserver of the unity of France and of all the liberal ideas proclaimed by the Constitutions.*"

Discipline

For the rest, a discipline, essentially military and extremely strict, effectively supplements the pedagogic effort to imbue the children with the "*national doctrine.*" The *lycée* is the ante-room of the barracks.[8]

The education of girls

As for girls, who neither enter the barracks nor become officials, Napoleon is not concerned with their education; he declares that they cannot "*be better brought up than by their own mothers.*" Their part is to provide the State with children and for that intellectural culture is not necessary.

Spirit and results of his work

Napoleon, on the 24th of March, 1808, wrote to Fontanes, whom he had made Grand Master of the University eight days before, as the last word on his educational system: "*His Majesty has desired to achieve in a State of forty million individuals what was formerly done by Sparta and Athens.*" Athens is inapplicable; it was after the ideal of Sparta, the least intellectual and the least intelligent of the Greek States, that he desired to model the youth of his Empire; his desire was not to make men of them, but subjects and soldiers. He had not time to carry his plans completely into effect; he succeeded, however, in "*taking education out of the hands of the priests*" as he desired, and in laying the foundations of the University edifice so soundly that it still lasts today. The old building has received some new fittings, it has opened its windows upon life: the timber-work has stood firm.

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[8] Napoleon had thought of a kind of military classification of the entire nation; it was to comprise five *conscriptions:* (1) Children and adolescents under the discipline of the University; (2) The annual *class* of conscripts; (3), (4), and (5) Three callings-up of the National Guard, classified according to age. All Frenchmen from ten to sixty years of age would have been thus brigaded. He had not time to realise this fine design.

2. Religion

The dissenting Churches

By three decrees of the 17th of March, 1808, Napoleon conferred a legal status upon the Jews, whose worship was authorised and supervised but not subsidised; the rabbis must inculcate respect for the laws, the obligation of military service and devotion to the emperor and, further, must pray for him. The Protestants were subjected to analogous obligations to be loyal, but their worship received a subvention from the State.

Freemasonry

Freemasonry itself found favour with the emperor who was probably a member; his brother Joseph was Grand Master and its membership included many personages of high rank (for instance, ten Marshals out of twenty-five). It was, as a whole, devoted to the régime and gave it support.

Napoleon's first attitude towards the Church

Napoleon thus neglected no force which might act upon opinion and dispose it according to his views, but as may be readily understood, it was upon the Catholic Church that he mainly relied for the attainment of his aim. It was indeed only to make use of her that he had signed the Concordat and consented to figure as a Catholic. For the rest, he was willing to pay liberally for her service and, during the first years of the Empire at least, he spent on her almost without counting the cost. He even granted a stipend to officiating priests, curés of small communes, though the Concordat did not oblige him to do so. He heaped official honours on the dignitaries of the Church and compelled all constituted authorities to attend religious ceremonies as a body. He shut the mouths of the dissidents: old and tenacious Constitutionals or members of the "Petite Église" such as would not hear of a Concordat priesthood. He authorised the reinstatement in the Empire of a large number of Sisterhoods and of several Brotherhoods; the former because they were, or professed to be, *hospitable or charitable*, the latter because they were *missionaries*. He shut his eyes to the semi-clandestine restoration of many other orders and only rarely punished when audacities came to surpass all bounds. Surprise might well be felt at such benevolence and long-suffering, if it were not so well known that Napoleon gave nothing for nothing. A phrase dropped at the Council of State on the 22d of May, 1804, in reference to the Lazarists and other missionaries, is enough to enlighten us: "*I shall send them to make observations upon the state of the country. Their robe protects them and serves as a cloak for political and commercial designs!*"

The semblance: the subjection of the clergy

His clergy, he insisted, must be disciplined. They must preach as they are told to and, from 1806 onwards, they must teach *the Catechism of the Empire*, which declared that whosoever disobeys "Napoleon I our Emperor" and refuses him "*conscription and the United Duties*" lays himself open to "*eternal damnation.*" He was particularly anxious that the Church, by her promises of compensation in a future life, should support, by the best arguments he knew, the scandalous inequality on which his social organisation was based. For the rest, he took good care to keep the priests (*la prêtraille* as he called them to his intimates) in their place. "*They must,*" he said, "*be kept within their own bounds. It is a great mistake to let them feel that they have any political importance.*"

The reality: undercurrent of action by the bishops

He had the worst of the game. While he received every outward token of respect and devotion, every formula of flattery, and indeed of servility which he could expect, he could not prevent *his* more experienced bishops, many of whom had acquired, under the Ancien Régime, a sense and a practical experience of business, from scheming behind the scenes for the restoration of the wealth and influence of the Church. With the complicity of the minister Portalis, a good Gallican but a convinced *clerical*—that is to say, a strong partisan for the political influence of the national clergy—they made such energetic use of their advantages that in 1815 they were to be in a position to provide the monarchic reaction with the only sound basis available to it in France since the Revolution. In other words, they had, under the eye of Napoleon, set centrifugal forces to work which escaped his sight, and, in the great crisis which destroyed him, they acted against him.

The conflict with the pope

This was the more serious in that Napoleon came into conflict with the pope, let himself be driven into a deadlock and, to escape, was impelled, as was usual with him, to use force. He lost in this adventure all the benefits won by his otherwise astute Church policy.

The prestige of the Roman pontiff

The religious policy of the Revolution in the first place, and after it the Concordat, had restored full prestige to the Roman pontiff. Napoleon had indeed allowed him one exceptional privilege, such as none of the popes, his predecessors, had ever dared to lay claim to. When First Consul he desired to dispose of the episcopal sees of the Ancien Régime as he saw fit, but was at a loss how to deal with their titular owners, who had taken refuge in London; he accordingly allowed Pius VII, after having demanded that they should "*spontaneously dispossess themselves*" to "*depose them by authority*," though not the least canonical delinquency could be alleged against them, and though their only transgression had been strict obedience to Pius VI, in their refusal to accept the Civil Constitution. The fact that afterwards the Organic Articles obliged the clergy of France to teach and respect Gallicanism, as represented by the Declaration of 1682, had little bearing on the matter: the pope found himself untouched by this restriction.

The origins of the conflict: 1. They are political

The first occasion for conflict was wholly political: Pius VII had failed, in 1804, to obtain the restoration of the *Legations*.[9] He had been disappointed at this, when he had taken the pains to come from Rome to assist at the coronation of Napoleon; a little later he refused the emperor the requested annulment of the marriage of Jérôme, his brother. A little later again, Napoleon, considering the defences of Ancona, a pontifical port, to be insufficient and having fruitlessly requested the Roman government to improve them, provided for them himself by occupying them with a garrison of his own. The pope protested on the grounds of neutrality (November 13, 1805) and he added for his own personal relief: "*We speak to you frankly: since our return from Paris we have experienced nothing but bitterness and unpleasantness.*" This letter, described by Napoleon as *ridiculous* and *insensate*, was the starting-point of a correspondence which merely aggravated the discord. The emperor maintained that he was the successor of Charlemagne, the sovereign of Rome as of the whole Empire, and he vented threats: "*I give the pope to know my intentions . . . ; if he does not acquiesce in them I will reduce him to the condition in which he was before Charlemagne*" (February 13, 1806). The pontiff replied (March 21) that Napoleon was "*Emperor of the French and not Emperor of Rome*" whose legitimate sovereign, the pope, had never and would never, recognise in his States "*any power overriding his own.*" Napoleon made no reply but, under the pretext that the court of Rome was making difficulties about recognising Joseph, just *promoted* King of Naples (April, 1806), he proceeded to the occupation of the Pontifical States in 1807 and to that of Rome herself on the 2d of February, 1808; annexed four Roman provinces to the kingdom of Italy, and expelled such cardinals from the city as had displeased him.

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[9] This was the name given to the provinces of the pontifical State. It referred, then, to Romagna and Umbria.

2. The opposing theses

The violences of the Emperor

Pius VII changes his ground of resistance

In short, he had dealt with the pope as with an ordinary sovereign, at the same time vainly protesting that he recognised him as "*a spiritual chief*"; he could not compel him to dissociate his qualification as such from that of temporal sovereign, or prevent him from reinforcing one title by the other. Pius VII refused canonical institution to bishop after bishop successively nominated by the imperial government, or, in other words, suspended the execution of the Concordat. And it was not long before Napoleon found himself seriously embarrassed.

Violence increased, but in vain

He annexed Rome and the Pontifical States to the Empire; Pius VII excommunicated him. He laughed at the sentence, declared that the pontiff was "*a mad fool*" who ought to be "*shut up*" and acted accordingly. In the night of the 5th to the 6th of July, the pope was arrested by gendarmes, carried into France and interned at Savona. In a fragile body and under an aspect of timidity he had a strong will and a deep sense of his duty; he did not yield. Napoleon, insensible to moral force and incredulous when he encountered it, could not understand how great was the intangible power enlisted against him by a weak old man. He employed every method of those which usually sufficed to bring men to his knees—he failed. The Imperial Church gave hardly a sign of objection or disquiet, but little by little it slipped from his grasp and secretly turned against him.

The Council of 1811

A Council was held in Paris, presided over by his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, which opened on the 17th of June, 1811. By this he gained nothing but a proof that the clergy would not support him against the pontiff. He had the *ringleaders* incarcerated and *discharged*—the Bishops of Tournai, Gand, Troyes—and in the end obtained the passing of a resolution according to which canonical institution would be given by the Metropolitan of each bishop chosen, if after six months the pope had not given it, but the Council made its decision dependent upon the pontifical approval. In the end Pius VII sanctioned it, but with the reservation that the institution in question should be conferred by the Metropolitan in the name of the sovereign pontiff, thus leaving himself a loophole for refusal in any case. Napoleon, exasperated, struck right and left at every one whom he thought might be a partisan of the pope and multiplied his menaces against the old man. As a matter of fact, he merely bred hatred for himself among the Catholics, and he remained impotent to do more.

Fontainebleau

At the end of his resources and on the eve of the Russian campaign, he decided to make an effort in person and had the pope carried to Fontainebleau (June, 1812). He was unable to interview him until after his defeat, a fact not in his favour, and it was he who finally made the essential concessions in the agreement which has received the name of the *Concordat of Fontainebleau* (January 25, 1813). And in spite of a condescension which cost him so much, when the signatures had already been exchanged he could not prevent the pope from changing front and retracting his agreement (March 24). Despite all his severity towards the recalcitrant clerics who grew more and more numerous as faith in the solidity of the Empire grew weaker, he could never effectively bridle the Catholic opposition which was becoming only too evident. On the 20th of January, 1814, he had fallen so low as to offer Pius VII *a treaty of alliance* involving the restitution of the Pontifical States. The pope refused. He knew his triumph to be not far distant: he travelled again, under escort, the road to Savona; but on the 10th of March, 1814, an order was given for his release. He entered Rome on the 24th of May; he had won the day.

Victory of the pope

The lesson of the conflict

Some stress has been laid upon this dramatic dispute, in order to make clear, by a crucial example, the real weakness of Napoleon's method of government. He constructs frames for institutions, in terms of the work which he expects from the latter, always looking to the maintenance or increase of his own personal power. In these are his underlings, kennelled and well kept, restrained by the prospect of reward for good service and of punishment for failure. He despises all right, and subordinates all justice to the interests of the State; this, as a whole, is his system. It succeeds in most cases, but it has two formidable *specific defects.* First it lives by devouring its own substance: favours have limits and fears as well. Custom dulls the edge of both. Second, its basis being a complete disregard of all moral forces, it is thrown out of gear and into a deadlock directly it encounters one. This is the great lesson given by the religious policy of Napoleon.

III

Efforts to stabilise the régime

So personal was the imperial work, so exclusively constructed for the satisfaction of one man, that Napoleon could hardly bear even to think of the time when "the Emperor" should no longer be himself. And his interest in the wondrous game, in which his energy exulted and was extended to its utmost, was great enough for him to desire that its results should endure. For this reason he made a curious effort to give his system all the outward semblance of permanent stability. He surrounded with pomp his person and kingly office; he sought splendour in letters, arts, science; he impelled his subjects into material prosperity, all as useful diversions for thoughts which otherwise might be busied with the subject of their servitude.

A. *The imperial pomp and its setting*

He wished therefore to surround himself with a magnificent court of military and civil dignitaries. His first act as emperor (May 19, 1804) was to appoint fourteen Marshals. On the 14th of July he distributed the first stars of the Legion of Honour, a move towards the restoration of the decorations of the Ancien Régime.[10] On the 2d of December, 1804, the rite of his coronation was accomplished in the Church of Notre-Dame, the pope in person presiding. It was possibly not in the highest taste, Fontanes, indeed, irreverently compared the display to "*that which follows the fat ox*" at the carnival; but it was splendid and theatrical. So, too, with the imperial court; sumptuous and well disciplined, but devoid of real distinction, of sober and natural elegance. It was the well-constructed setting of a life, opulent indeed and well ordered, but still the life of a parvenu. Napoleon spent freely to bring the *Ci-devants* to his side, as many as would come; they were to be his professors of good breeding in the Tuileries. But it was easier to enforce an elaborate étiquette than to re-educate the new courtiers. A beginning would indeed have to be made with the Master himself who remained always liable to "lapses," to reversions to the primitive manners highly distressing to the depositaries of the old traditions of Versailles.

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[10] In the mind of the First Consul the *Legion of Honour* was not a decoration but a body of citizens, civil and military alike, picked out and pensioned by the government, divided into *cohorts* throughout France, and intended to form at once an encouraging example to ordinary Frenchmen and a support to the institutions of the State. They were to be like *"masses of granite"* set on the soil of France to give a firm footing. Neither the Council of State nor the Tribunate welcomed with any warmth these *"citizens of the first class,"* and the proposal was passed by the Legislative Body by only a moderate majority (166 votes against 110) on the 19th of May, 1802. Napoleon postponed its execution and meanwhile modified its principle and appli-

1. The new court

2. The great dignitaries: the imperial nobility

From 1804 onwards honorific titles soon multiplied. The Constitution of the year XII already recognised the dignity of *prince*, conferred on members of the imperial family, and it created high posts which, naturally merely sinecures, conferred an official lustre on their recipients: *Grand Elector*, *Arch Chancellor*, *Arch Treasurer*, *Constable* and others. Next soon appeared "*the great civil officers of the crown*," provided by Article 50 of the Constitution, besides the Marshals: *the Grand Almoner, the Grand Marshal of the Palace, the Grand Chamberlain, the Grand Master of the Horse, the Grand Huntsman, the Grand Master of Ceremonies.* Finally, from 1806 onwards, Napoleon was to distribute donations of lands, all outside France, carrying with them titles of nobility. Thus Cambacérès was Duke of Parma, Lebrun Duke of Plaisance, Talleyrand Prince of Bénévent, Soult Duke of Dalmatia, and so forth.

cation. He knew that men may be led by ribbons judiciously used. *"They call them 'baubles'! What of that? It is by baubles that men are led,"* he had said to the Council of State in May, 1802.

Next the emperor made it his custom to connect a title with some brilliant achievement as a sort of decoration: thus Lefebvre became Duke of Danzig after his capture of that town in 1807. Ney was Duke of Elchingen, later Prince of the Moscowa, Davout Duke of Auerstaedt, later Prince of Eckmühl and the like, in memory of victories won or at least of feats accomplished in these different places. Counts, barons and knights followed in their turn, and *thus a new nobility was formed, the Imperial Nobility.*

Its character and its signification

It differed from the other and old nobility, by owing nothing to birth, and being formed solely by promotion. Secondly, it was not necessarily hereditary; titles granted with the right of transmission to descendants were far less numerous than titles for life. Finally, while it brought material advantages, sometimes considerable, by the donations which often accompanied its grants, it received no political or social privilege. It was intended to recompense good service and to confer distinction in the world of high officials, courtiers and servants of the Empire, and not to restore the theoretical inequality abolished by the Revolution. Yet Napoleon never lost sight of his object, the creation of *a directing class*, to be at once the basic support and the crowning adornment of his rule, which, in one aspect, his nobility is. This is clearly proved by the dispositions made by him in 1807 and 1808 to extend largely the privilege of hereditary titles to those of the ennobled who formed *majorats;* that is to say, who settled on their eldest sons, as compared with their other heirs, a larger amount, the figure of which was fixed by the State for each rank of the nobility. He even attached a title of nobility to certain posts and made it hereditary under the same condition. Thus ministers, senators, councillors of state, presidents of the Legislative Body and even archbishops had a hereditary right to the title of *count*, if their "settlement" amounted to a majorat of 30,000 francs in income. The grants which were one of his usual instruments for attaching men to himself, and were heaped upon his marshals and his ministers, facilitated the establishment of these majorats, alien as they were to the spirit of equality implied in revolutionary legislation.[11]

B. *Its intellectual galaxy*

1. Literature

Napoleon desired his reign to be embellished by an intellectual galaxy no less than his court by new nobles and gold-laced dignitaries. Unfortunately his horror of liberty was in no way favourable to the flowering of literary genius. All the encouragement in the world cannot give a mediocre writer the talent which he lacks. The taste, too, of the time was shackled by an admiration for antiquity which condemned it to a literature of imitation. Napoleon himself was strong for classicism; when he was self-conscious and on his best behaviour the antique was always his model. Here as everywhere else his ideas and his tastes were organised into an indisputable and inevitable *doctrine.*

Classicism and preromanticism

His official great man is the aged Abbé Delille, an adroit translator of Virgil, an abundant, facile, ingenious versifier, but barren of personality, void of ideas and emotions. The writers by nature, the creators, the innovators, are outside this official literature, outside the imperial system, outside the range of taste of the emperor and his protégés. In those lie the seeds of *romanticism:* they are Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël. Apart from them, the literature of the Empire may be said to be of little account in the history of French letters, remarkable only for its aspiration to produce genius on order and made to measure and for failure in the attempt.

2. The theatre

The theatre which Napoleon included in his system naturally followed the same road as literature. The emperor, in fact, allowed none but *privileged theatres;* that is to say, official ones, and these were supervised in the same manner as books. Tragedy, reduced to imitations of the classics, became emptied of interest; modern subjects were forbidden ground. It was the same with comedy, because, as Madame de Rémusat remarked: "*It was not wished to exhibit the weaknesses and defects of different classes of society on the stage when all society had been renovated by Bonaparte, whose work had to be respected.*" Napoleon had a liking for *thesis plays*, on the condition that their thesis conformed always to his opinions and his interests.

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[11] Berthier, adding up the annual amount of his charges and donations, arrived at a figure of 1,355,000 francs of revenue, Davout had upwards of 910,000 francs, Ney, 728,000. A minister received the annual emolument of at least 200,000 francs.

3. The fine arts

The doctrines

The classical doctrine, expressed with the resolution and finality of a fanatic by Quatremère de Quincy and accepted in full by the emperor, was imposed on official art no less rigorously than on letters, but proved in that domain somewhat less devastating and destructive to the individuality and originality of the executants. In the first place, it could not be carried so far as to prevent them from using their eyes on the world about them, from being influenced by reality, and from treating modern subjects. In the second place, Napoleon desired, like Louis XIV before him, that his reign should be *illustrated;* that is to say, that the great events which occurred in the Empire should be perpetuated on canvas or in marble. Finally there was no need for the censorship to constrain and restrain them to the same extent as the writers, and moreover, in default of profound and new ideas, they still had the resource of giving to expression and form the perfection which is sufficient to make a work of art at least interesting. Napoleon allowed discussion of the problems of art, these having the advantage of raising unlimited passion without endangering the *national doctrine.* For this reason a *liberal doctrine* was able to obtain a footing side by side with official classicism and to divide the allegiance of artists.

Napoleon's point of view

The emperor had not a shred of artistic perception or taste, but he thought works of art, in a State like his, an indispensable ornament, whose production his government must encourage. He bought, without haggling over the price, many pictures and statues and distinguished famous artists with decorations and titles. There was *a painter to the Emperor* (David), *a painter to the empress* (Isabey), *an architect to the Emperor* (Fontaine); there was above all, *a General Directorship of Museums* (created on the 19th of November, 1802) to which Denon was appointed, a man of good taste and great activity, in no respect an extreme fanatic for classicism, who made his department highly efficient.

His inspiration and projects

Napoleon urged upon *his* artists the pursuit of the grandiose and the gigantesque or at least of effect above all things. *The Coronation* and *the Distribution of the Eagles* of David were in perfect harmony with his aesthetic side and he was so struck by *Justice pursuing Crime* by Prudhon in the Salon of 1808 that he decorated, on the spot, the author, at that time poor and unknown. He dreamed of a transformation of Paris before which the glory won for Augustus by his embellishment of Rome should grow pale. His plans were inspired by his love for the enormous and the theatrical: the construction of the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile gives us an idea of them. He had thought, it was said, of transporting St. Peters from Rome to Paris, finding Notre-Dame too small for him! Time for the completion of his plans was denied him.

Architecture and sculpture

Neither the architecture nor the sculpture of the Empire produced any really personal work: both run commonly in classic ruts and are imitations, copies, vulgarisations of the antique, though they preserve a feeling for a whole and for stately parade which will not be undervalued by the spectator who, with his back to the railing of the Tuileries, looks down the immense perspective which runs thence to the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile. The furniture of the Empire, which, though rich, looks uncomfortable and cold in a little room, shows value and line in the decorative whole of a large apartment. Its feeling and intention have a value of their own.

Painting appears to have had the good fortune to be dealt with by artistic personalities stronger than those engaged in other arts; its productions are more varied, more original: David, Prudhon, Isabey, Gérard, Girodet, Gros, Guérin, Géricault are far from being all cut on the same plan. In their mere enumeration we pass from a ferocious classicism to a convinced romanticism with every intervening stage between the two. Their work does not much move us or even please us in every part; far otherwise, but it does not leave us indifferent.

Painting

4. The sciences

In the scientific domain there are some great names, but all are survivors from the preceding period: Fourcroy, Monge, Laplace, Lalande, Lamarck, Chaptal. These still work on, but conditions are unfavourable to speculation on great subjects; creative science, too, needs an atmosphere of liberty which is lacking. Napoleon endeavours to attract men of science to *his* Institute, of which he himself was a member, but his real object is just as much to keep his eye and his hand upon them as to do them honour. He is capable of ill-treating them to any extent if they displease him as he once did with Lalande, and, on another occasion, Lamarck.

5. Economic life

The imperial intervention

It was to the interest of Napoleon that France should be prosperous and grow rich, thus securing his government and justifying it. He did not fail to encourage agriculture, commerce and industry by subventions and exhortations. The necessity of finding some substitute for colonial foodstuffs when resumption of war with the English had almost closed the seas, further stimulated his endeavours; important results were obtained, particularly in the industrial domain: large-scale industry had begun with the development of mechanism and the utilisation of coal. These results themselves might undoubtedly have been far greater had the government not given way, here as elsewhere, to its mania for regulation, supervision, inspiration, and if it had less often changed its opinion about the methods to be preferred in production and on the productions to be favoured. Napoleon, for the most part, knew nothing of these questions of detail: Chaptal remarked that in agriculture in particular "*his ignorance was illimitable.*" But he was never content to be without an opinion or when he had formed one to refrain from its application.

Benefits derived from the régime

The *peasants* became attached to the régime since it seemed to guarantee them against any return of the Ancien Régime and to secure them from any resumption of the *national property* which they had acquired cheaply during the Revolution. *Industrialists* and *merchants* thoroughly appreciated the stability and order which allowed *business* to be done on long credit, and the financial reconstruction which gave them security. Only the *workmen* had cause to complain of the narrow and vexatious regulation and policing which made them completely dependent upon their employers. Collective abstentions from work were prohibited under penalty of imprisonment. The length of the working day was regulated by police ordinance and the movement of workers from place to place subjected to formalities worthy of the Ancien Régime. Napoleon feared the indiscipline and the disorder of the manual labourer. For the rest, since there were no stoppages of work, since wages, thanks to the activity of industry and the relative scarcity of labour, and also to the fall in the cost of living, remain high enough to make them tolerably well-to-do, the workers, it appears, did not greatly resent their inferior condition.

General results of the effort

Generally speaking, the Empire was a period of general recovery and well-being. In spite of the perpetual wars and the difficulties caused by the maritime blockade, at least until 1812, the country rapidly proceeded towards the economic recovery by which, indeed, its attention was almost entirely absorbed. In this Napoleon experienced an advantage which certainly could not have been long-lived, since it is a well-established fact of experience that, while a people under necessity of reconstructing its means of existence may be disposed to tolerate despotism and be silent before arbitrary power, one which has grown rich will soon recover its direct interest in its destinies and will grow restive if control of them is denied. Napoleon, in 1814, saw clearly that this was actually happening in France, a fact that he admitted in a conversation with Benjamin Constant.

IV

The real foundations of the régime: popularity and force

Finally, all the precautions and institutions of Napoleon were insufficient to conceal the profound truth that all his power depended on his *popularity* and on his *military force*, guaranteed by good finance and authenticated by victory and *glory*.

A. *How Napoleon's popularity dwindled*

His popularity was impaired in the first place by *his religious policy*, not that he interfered with religion, but because his conduct towards the pope alienated the clergy, their devotion waned and their influence was even turned against him when this could be done without openly jeopardising themselves. It was impaired, too, by *the abuse of the United Duties*, indirect taxes levied upon drink, a form of taxation which, already regarded as odious under the Ancien Régime, was restored in 1804 and perfected; that is to say, still further extended from 1806 to 1810. Heavier and heavier demands had to be made upon the country as the military successes became less productive. Finally it was impaired by *the abuse of conscription*, made inevitable by the continual wars and becoming, in the end, a national calamity. In order to evade service peasants took refuge in the woods. By 1810, 160,000 of these recalcitrants had been already condemned by name and on their families, considered as their accomplices, fines amounting to 170,000,000 francs had been imposed. In 1811 and 1812, it was found necessary to form flying columns which conducted "drives" across country to collect those who had not given themselves up, together with the swarm of deserters, to say nothing of those who had mutilated themselves to avoid service. The old war lassitude had reappeared; the auxiliary of Bonaparte in 1799, it was now the antagonist of Napoleon.

B. *How his military strength disappeared*

His military strength was exhausted by overwork; the old soldiers were worn out and the generals weary with running from one end of Europe to the other. The early enthusiasm disappeared and the army, first "satiated with glory," finally became sick of it, knowing only too well the price that has to be paid for victory. The old soldiers still have a devotion for the emperor strong enough to overcome their discontent and their fatigue: they grumble—Napoleon called them *les grognards* (the grumblers)—but they march. The officers are less resigned and after the first great wars (1805 to 1807) some signs of lassitude and disaffection appear among them.[12] War had, for long, fed war. Napoleon knew well the art and craft of sweating the vanquished for money: in March, 1809, he boasted of the milliard extracted from Prussia! He counted on victory for the balancing of his budget. The defeat which descended on him in 1812 and, with greater severity, in the two following years, was at once the destruction of his real strength and that of his Empire.

Tyranny and fragility of this government

In reality this burdensome despotism, which had pushed contempt for the rights of man even farther than the Ancien Régime, which had re-established police supervision and, where it saw fit, the internment of *suspects* like the revolutionary government, which had put in force the odious practice of confiscation of property, under the name of supplementary penalty, which finally had restored the *Black Cabinet* through whose hands all private correspondence passed for examination and utilisation, a government which depended for its very existence on coercion, fear and corruption, on the stifling of all free opinion, and on the abasement of the people, had *failed to establish itself on a firm foundation.* Its power was more apparent than real: its foundations were fragile in the extreme.

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[12] On this point read Ch. Nodier, *Histoire des Sociétés secrètes dans l'armée*, 1815, remembering, however, that he has made rather too much of small facts.

A proof: the conspiracy of General Malet

One small event is adequate proof of this fact. During the Russian campaign (1812) a republican general, named Malet, who had been compromised in the conspiracy of 1808 [13] and confined under the custody of the police in a hospital of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, there concocted, quite by himself, an extraordinary scheme. He imagined that Napoleon might well die in the course of his distant campaign and he pictured to himself what then was likely to happen in France. On this hypothesis he forged ostensible proclamations of the Senate to which the direction of the government had been committed, conferred on himself, by one of these, full powers over the troops quartered in Paris, forging plausible imitations of the official seals and stamps. He then picked out a confidant, a certain Abbé Lafon, a Royalist and Ultramontane, interned like himself, with two assistants, young men, twenty-eight years of age, one a friend of Lafon, the other a corporal of the Municipal Guard in Paris. He appointed the former *Commissioner of Police*, and the other his *aide-de-camp*. Then on the night of the 22d of October he escaped from his place of detention, resumed his general's uniform, proceeded to set free two other generals, Guidal and Lahorie, who had been interned without trial, one since the beginning of the year, the other for nine years. They never for a moment suspected his artifice and carried out the orders which he gave them. He had called up and requisitioned some troops whose officers followed him without protest or reflection. He had Savary, the Minister of Police, arrested and imprisoned. He occupied the Prefecture of Police, the Hôtel de Ville, where the Prefect of the Seine,

His starting-point and his plan

Its execution

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[13] There were several more or less serious conspiracies under the Empire, but none succeeded. Napoleon showed a good deal of discretion in the punishment of their authors, not wishing the public to know that conspiracies still continued.

Frochot, made haste to prepare a hall for a meeting of the provisional government, announced by Malet. No one showed any signs of astonishment or discomposure; no one seemed to remember the existence of the regency organised by Napoleon to govern in his absence. It is impossible to say how the adventure would have ended if Malet had not committed the imprudence of making his way alone into the Hôtel de l'État-Major, where he was recognised by an officer and arrested. He and his involuntary accomplices were shot; but he had, in fact, been master of Paris for several hours and his *coup de main* had encountered no resistance whatever. When Napoleon learned what had happened he affected complete calm, but he was heard several times to exclaim: "*What of my wife, my son, the institutions of the Empire? No one gave a thought to any of them!*" None did give a thought to any of these matters because they were really of no account. His person only still counted, to which he had subordinated everything. An accepted rumour that he was dead was enough to show the extreme fragility of his work. After the Malet affair, a police enquiry revealed the existence among the public of disquieting symptoms of discontent.[14] The Minister of Police and the empress received anonymous letters declaring that while this time "*they might have gone the wrong way to work,*" better luck was expected next time.

Its failure and its lesson

V

The internal history of the Empire

The internal history of the Empire is poor in great events; it is occupied almost entirely with matters of detail and administrative measures intended to perfect and consolidate the régime. The only events which stand out originate in similar

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[14] A schoolboy of fourteen, named Lavigne, a pupil in the lycée Charlemagne, composed the following epitaph for Malet:

Hic jacet infelix miserando carmine Malet,
Flendus, cui si non haesit fortuna, tyranni
Victima si periit, magnis tamen excidit ausis.

The imprudent pupil was expelled from the lycée.

A. *The question of Napoleon's divorce*

preoccupations. I mean, in particular, the divorce of Napoleon, his marriage with an Austrian arch-duchess, and the birth of his son. Joséphine had not given him a child; she was forty-four in 1807 when he first appears to have thought of repudiating her. He decided upon this in 1809. A Privy Council declared the separation of the couple by mutual consent (December 15), and the Senate authenticated their action by *senatus-consultum*, next day. Joséphine, at the time of the coronation, had been so shrewd as to inform the pope that her marriage had not been a religious one, and Napoleon, faced by the determination of the pope not to attend the ceremony unless this situation was regularised, had been obliged to consent to a *nuptial benediction* discreetly pronounced by his uncle, Cardinal Fesch. The officialdom of Paris took the *clandestine character* of this celebration as a basis for its declaration that the marriage was null and void (January 12, 1810).

The marriage with Marie-Louise

The emperor had secured his divorce only in order to marry again. He caused a list to be drawn up of young marriageable princesses from whom an empress might be chosen; it contained eighteen names. From these he chose three [15] which he submitted to a solemn meeting of the Privy Council as a matter of form, but he had already decided to marry Marie-Louise, willingly given him by the Emperor of Austria in fear that he might otherwise marry a Russian princess. The young archduchess—she was nineteen—submitted to reasons of state.

Its influence on the régime

The marriage took place on the 2d of April, 1810. It was accompanied with sumptuous festivities and, so far as the government was concerned, marked a definite turn to the Right; in accordance with which Napoleon dismissed Fouché, whose revolutionary antecedents might be regarded as suspicious by his new family, and gave *ci-devant* nobles freer access to high administrative employment. He leaned more and more to the ideas and the men of the Ancien Régime: he had entered into the spirit of the authentic kings. The birth of a son who, in advance, had received the significant title of *King of Rome*,[16] put the coping-stone on his pride and seemed to make him a promise that the future was his forever (March 20, 1811).

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[15] They were those of Anne, sister of the tsar—she was only thirteen!—of Marie-Louise of Austria and of a princess of Saxony.

The "King of Rome"

B. *Napoleon's fall*

The situation in 1814

But the defeat which he suffered in Russia in 1812, the revolt and the loss of Germany in 1813, the invasion of France in 1814, made irreparable breaches in the great and well-devised fortress of power he had erected. He should by then have been able to count his people his friends, but he had broken the heart and spirit of that very people. He had turned against him even those three deepest feelings, of which I have spoken, which had done him such potent service after the 18th Brumaire. He had made Catholics think him the persecutor of their spiritual head. He had worn France out by his exactions in men and in money. Finally he had suffered defeat and brought foreign armies upon national soil. *He found at his elbow only desertion, apathy or treason.* His own officials, Talleyrand, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, at their head; men whom he had made, senators first of all, turned against him and avenged themselves in a day for the servitude of years. On the 2d of April the Senate declared "*Napoleon Bonaparte and his family excluded from the throne, the French people and the army released from their oath of allegiance.*" On the 3d of April the same Senate explained its decision, giving reasons for it by a long statement unanimously adopted, which enumerated the chief acts of illegality committed by Napoleon during his reign, including those which the Senate had approved by *senatus-consulta*, or tacitly acquiesced in. The Legislative Body, at an emergency meeting, voted in its turn for dethronement. The very marshals deserted their now impotent master, and Marmont, for whom he had always shown a peculiar affec-

Dethronement

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[16] The emperors, heads of the *Holy Roman Germanic Empire*, called themselves *Kings of the Romans* as long as they were not crowned.

tion, betrayed him without a blush. The others compelled him to abdicate, at first in favour of the King of Rome (April 4), and later unconditionally (April 6). The Allies conferred on him the sovereignty of the island of Elba which he perforce accepted.

Abdication

The island of Elba

VI

The first Restoration

A provisional government was formed by a vote of the Senate on the 31st of March. Talleyrand was its soul, and its main concern appears to have been to continue the imperial officials in their profitable employments. It appeared to him that the simplest course would be to recall the Bourbons, who would be only too pleased with their windfall to cavil much over its conditions. To the Bourbons no one in France gave a thought outside a handful of Royalists, without strength to move opinion in their favour and still less to impose them. But it was hard to find a substitute for Napoleon: was it to be the King of Rome? Neither the provisional government and still less the majority of the Allies desired this. They feared a regency under Marie-Louise with the hand of Metternich held over her. Was it to be the Republic? This was not to be thought of: the coalition of kings would hear no word of it and the memory of the Terror stood in its way in the minds of most Frenchmen themselves. Was there to be another emperor?—the tsar thought of Bernadotte. He could only come from the mint of Napoleon and have his defects without his genius. By a process of elimination they were obliged to fall back on the Bourbons. Their return was favoured by the complete indifference and the complete *nolonté* (lack of will) of the people of France, who wanted nothing but tranquillity, time to take breath and to recover. Talleyrand induced the Allies, though they were far from enthusiastic in its favour, to accept and support this solution. It was in this manner that Louis XVIII, at that time and since 1807 a refugee in England, was recalled to the throne

A. *The return of the Bourbons*

How it was possible

Louis XVIII restored to the throne

of his ancestors on the condition that he should sign a Constitution, which the Senate took upon itself to draft and pass (April 6) and maintain the existing situations. The Allies themselves realised that he could not return unconditionally and simply and purely revert to the Ancien Régime. He therefore reconciled himself to the grant on the 4th of June of a *Constitutional Charter*, vouchsafed of his own free will but which under its mediaeval name consecrated the principles of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, consolidated the principal political, civil and social victories of the Revolution and retained the imperial administration.

The opportunities of the new king

But the king knew nothing of the new France to which he returned, and the men he brought with him were bursting with rancour and greedy for revenge as well as quite destitute of political sense and experience. It would have been easy for him to turn popular sentiment in his favour, the more so as the bourgeois were quite ready to support him, having every reason to believe that, with him at their side, they would regain the influence reft from them by the military government of Napoleon, and above all because they hoped for opportunities of doing much and profitable business in the period of recovery now dawning in France.

How he lost them

Louis XVIII understood nothing of all this; he yielded to the reactionary spirit of his entourage, in particular to that of his brother the Count of Artois, and so ruled as greatly to disquiet his people, who, in default of any other sentiment, keenly dreaded any return to the Ancien Régime. He openly favoured the nobles and the clergy, the resumption of whose authority over themselves was dreaded by the peasants. He introduced a law which subjected the press to censorship and alienated the liberals. Above all he estranged the army by placing 10,000 officers on half pay and filling its ranks with returned emigrants, whose promotion he based on the number of campaigns they had served against France. Then, as a crowning imprudence, he returned to the emigrants, by ordinance, their still unsold property and allowed it to be understood that this was merely the beginning of reparations, the king regretting "*himself unable to give to this act so full an extension as it was his heartfelt wish to do.*" The buyers of "national property" took alarm.

Unpopularity of the restored monarchy

In a few months, disillusion, disaffection and hostility had succeeded the hope and good will, or at least the resignation, with which Louis XVIII had at first been received. Napoleon was informed of this. He was restive under his deposition;[17] he believed France to be his for the taking, and, indeed, was aware, too, that his enemies of yesterday contemplated adding to his afflictions by his removal to some remote island—Saint Helena had been, in fact, already mentioned—and he may well have thought that he did not engage much in risking all to gain all. He landed at the Gulf of Jouan with seven hundred men on the 1st of March, 1815. He took the road over the Alps by Gap, Sisteron and Grenoble in order to avoid the Rhône valley which he knew to be hostile and marched to Paris by Lyons, Mâcon, Autun and Auxerre. Troops, despatched for his arrest, took his side; peasants received him with acclamation as he pointed out to them how they were menaced by the return of feudal oppression at the heels of the Bourbon; the blundering of the king had made him popular once more. He had said to the little troop of his friends on the shore of the Gulf of Jouan: "*The eagle with the national colours will fly from steeple to steeple to the towers of Notre-Dame*"; on the 20th of March he entered Paris. Enthusiastic crowds cried "*Vive l'Empereur*" (Long live the Emperor!) and "*A bas la calotte!*"[18]—a most instructive association of feelings. In

B. *The return from Elba*

The *flight of the eagle*

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[17] He appeared, however, to take a lively interest in his kingdom of eight thousand hectares and gave as much care to its organisation as though he were to spend his whole life there.

[18] This is par excellence the *anti-clerical* catchword in France. It is equivalent to "Down with the clergy!"

Lyons the cry of "*Down with the priests!*" had already been raised. On the day before, Louis XVIII had fled towards Lille.

The situation in March, 1815

Some resistance was attempted at Nîmes, Toulouse and at Bordeaux where the Duchess of Angoulême then was; all was suppressed without difficulty within a month. France had accepted the accomplished fact. But the foreign kings, not without reason, regarded it as a menace to the peace of Europe, and were nowise resigned to it.

C. *The Hundred Days*

The revival of revolutionary "patriotism"

This brief period of the Napoleonic restoration is known as the *Hundred Days* (March 20-June 22). In its course, Napoleon visibly altered his attitude. He acquiesced in the reorganisation of *the federations of patriots*, who, reverting to revolutionary tradition, swore to defend their fatherland and liberty; he granted the press almost complete freedom, counting upon it to revive the revolutionary spirit whose help he now needed. The country, harrowed by the peril of the fatherland, rose as one man, and again the cry went up: "*A bas les prêtres! Les aristocrates à la lanterne!*" (Down with the priests! aristocrats to the lamp-post!) Napoleon was in no mood to set up as a Jacobin dictator; this unlooked-for revival struck him with amazement, and alarmed far more than encouraged him. He realised, however, the need of pledges and guarantees to the liberals; but he gave them with so much precaution, hesitation and reserve as to lose much of the benefit which this return of revolutionary patriotism might have brought him. It was impossible for him radically to change his spirit and his system but, faced with this new situation, in fear of the obviously imminent foreign peril, he hesitated, postponed and seemed to have quite lost his gift for vigorous decision. He was, in fact, tired out and no longer the master of events that he had been. He decided to pass a *Supplementary Act to the Constitutions of the Empire*, the drafting of which he entrusted to Benjamin Constant, one of his former adversaries.

The hesitations of Napoleon

The *Supplementary Act* is much closer to the *Charter* of Louis XVIII than to the Constitutions of the year XII or the year X. It establishes a régime which is really parliamentary if not completely so. It restores the elections; it confers the essential powers of the legislative on the Chamber of Representatives and gives substantial security to public liberties. So rapid had been the new development of opinion that, as the emperor clearly realised, his "Constitution" even now did not satisfy it. In reality the disappointment was such that the "patriots," who expected a frank return to democracy, annoyed by the retention of *hereditary peerage*, a direct issue from the royal Charter, became discouraged and ceased their activity. The plebiscite in favour of the Supplementary Act resulted in 1,305,206 *affirmatives* to 4,206 *negatives;* but as there were between five and six millions of registered citizens, barely one-fifth had voted! The country had returned to its indifference.

The *Supplementary Act*

Its effect

When the determination of the Allies to make an end of Napoleon had plunged him again into war and he had lost the battle of *Waterloo* (June 18) French opinion had returned to the view of him which it had held in March, 1814: he had lost his opportunity of engaging it on his side and it was now, as a whole, and away from his presence which still aroused passing enthusiasm, alive to nothing but the misfortunes which had attended his return. The Chamber of Representatives, incited by La Fayette, ranged themselves against him, regarding him as the principal obstacle to peace. The Chamber of Peers followed. On the 22d of June he abdicated for a second time, proceeded to Rochefort, refused to accept a chance of escaping the English cruisers and of reaching America, and gave himself up to the English (July 15). He did no more than anticipate the intentions of the restored government of Louis XVIII, which had given orders that he should be placed at the disposal of the English commander,

The final downfall

as soon as it was so demanded. He was interned in the island of Saint Helena where he was to die on the 5th of May, 1821.[19]

Conclusion

The Empire had done France some incontestable and considerable services. Unfortunately, each had its counterpart, which greatly diminished its value, so that on balance, even without reckoning in the lamentable results of his foreign policy, there can hardly be any question that Napoleon did infinitely more evil than good to the unhappy country which was the field of experiment for his despotism of genius.

When the country, emerging from the revolutionary crisis, wounded and bewildered, was trying, in her trouble, to attain the political and social equilibrium needed for the restoration of her economic life, he had given her this equilibrium. He had, so to say, *administratively realised* the aspirations and the needs of the time. Never had France known such regularity, order, precision, even probity, in the conduct of the details of her business. The results of this reorganisation were satisfactory. The movement towards material reconstruction, commenced under the Directory—a fact too often forgotten—was both amplified and accelerated under the Consulate and the Empire. Terrible as had been the loss of life among the people through the continual wars,[20] the population increased by 2,000,000 souls between 1802 and 1814, rising from 27,000,000 to 29,000,000, a certain indication of increased well-being. But these results, which might well have been attained by others than himself and certainly would have been, were sought and attained by Napoleon for himself far more than for France; it was in a spirit of personal and selfish domination that he overrode parties, imposed social discipline, exalted authority. In his essential horror of all opposition and control, necessities always, to any government not entirely self-dependent, he extinguished political life, enervated and sterilised opinion. And he killed intellectual culture: the average ignorance of the France of 1815 was indeed appalling.

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[19] On this last part of his life see Lord Rosebery, *Napoleon, The Last Phase.* 1900.

[20] From 1804 to 1815 about 1,700,000 men, *taken from inside the boundaries of ancient France,* perished in the wars.

He did worse: he made his administration, in itself admirable, an engine for State tyranny so perfect, so convenient and so solidly constructed that every successive government that our country has known in the nineteenth century has taken the greatest care to preserve it for use in its own interest: the advance towards democracy, the real social progress inaugurated by the Revolution, have owed to this fact many checks and delays, although the Consular and Imperial constitutions, bound by their pretensions to follow those of the preceding epoch, found themselves compelled to reproduce their essential principles. The administrative shackles in question are being thrown off by our own present Republic only with infinite pains, piecemeal and by slow degrees. Imperial legislation, in spite of its parade of equity and its declared aim to embody eternal right, was devised, above all things, for the organisation and regulation of the existing society which Napoleon had to deal with. This legislation now no longer, in all its parts, in harmony with the ideas, sentiments, or social condition of today, still blocks the way, like a rock of granite, very heavy to move, very hard to cut through. The assemblage and crystallisation of all things round the one indispensable Man which characterise the Napoleonic edifice from top to bottom, still remain, wherever the original structure survives, and have the same drawbacks for us as they had for those for whom they were made.

Finally Napoleon developed in France the militarism, the aggressive and Chauvinistic patriotism whose model and idol he still remains. This has been a great evil. An even greater one has been the fact that legend was quick to display this despot of despots as the authentic son and the perfect personification of the Revolution, the depositary and realiser of its traditions. This legend permeating the mind of a people ill equipped to resist it, was to be pregnant with a formidable peril for the future; it produced a parody of the imperial adventure by a man not fit to tie Bonaparte's shoes and who without him would have been nothing.

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CHAPTER XXXIV

NAPOLEON AND EUROPE (1803-1815)

I

The interminable war

THE peace concluded at Amiens was no more than a transient truce, lasting barely a year (till May, 1803); the war with England, then resumed, was to continue till the fall of Napoleon. It was accompanied with a number of serious continental complications which imposed incessant effort upon France. In this the country was to wear itself out, and to lose all power to repel invasion when an exasperated Europe, unable to endure Napoleon any longer, and aided by his first great defeats, hurled itself afresh upon her frontiers.

A. *Its causes*

1. Sentiments of foreign powers

The principal causes of this murderous and ruinous agitation are sufficiently complex; they may be distinguished and classified as follows: the victory, aggrandisement and territorial completion of France aroused *disquiet and jealousy among other powers,* imbued as they were with the old policy of balance and counterbalance so dear to the heart of eighteenth-century monarchy. They declined to accept the accomplished fact, and hoped for an early opportunity to reverse and correct it. England was unwilling to part with any of her maritime and colonial power or with any of the economic advantages which she had gained during the preceding century; she did not intend that the questions at issue between herself and France dealt with by the treaty of Paris in 1763 should be reopened again. Similarly Napoleon had by no means abandoned his idea of playing a great part upon the seas and thus he never ceased to demand that they should be "*free.*" He proposed to reconstruct the colonial empire of

2. The policy of England

France and to revive her maritime trade; he noticed that Antwerp was a "*pistol pointed at England's heart.*" It is for this reason in particular that England was so reluctant to accept the French consolidation and domination in Belgium and the Netherlands. Austria was unreconciled to her eviction from an Italy which she had ruled for so long, or the curtailing of her influence in western Germany, where, since 1803, under the pretext of regulating compensations promised to the German princes who had lost their possessions on the left bank of the Rhine at the treaties of Basel and Lunéville, Napoleon had proceeded to territorial rearrangements distasteful to the Empire. Austria, moreover, possessed in the Archduke Charles an exceptionally gifted soldier who held himself in continual readiness to retaliate for the defeats of 1797 and 1800. It is possible that with tact and discretion all this ill-will might have been appeased and these difficulties solved otherwise than by arms; but they were faced by the insatiable and unscrupulous ambition, the brutal and aggressive shamelessness of Napoleon. Of all the causes of that appalling conflict, considered as epic by disastrous legend, this was most certainly the chief.

3. The policy of Austria

4. Napoleon

His plan and his aim

It is improbable that Napoleon acted upon any long meditated and logically constructed plan for universal domination; there is nothing to prove that he had even laid down its main lines; but he was imperious by nature; he wanted the first place in Europe and he liked to meddle with everything: most of his great enterprises are improvisations originating in occasion and directed by circumstances. It was success which, step by step, led him to extend his designs. It was success which raised his desires to the insane culmination of a claim to subordinate the world to his person. "*Aspiration for universal domination is part of his very nature,*" wrote Metternich on the 28th of July, 1810, "*it may be modified or kept within bounds, but extinguished never.*" His monstrous imagination may have pictured to itself a world ordered by beneficent law under a pacific sovereign and that sovereign himself; but he saw that conquest must come first and he accepted the condition with alacrity. "*A Washington with a crown*," he said in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, "*yes, but I could not reasonably expect to become this except through universal dictatorship; to this I laid claim.*" In reality, once started on the giddy down-hill slope where his inordinate ambition had cast him when it had become his undisputed master—at the time of the negotiations of Lunéville in 1801—it was impossible for him to stop, still more to retrace his steps, and he continued on the downward course to catastrophe with accelerating rapidity.

His fixed idea

He had one fixed idea: *to overthrow England.* Its hold over him came possibly through tradition; French diplomacy of the eighteenth century—except when it was led astray by reminiscences of Richelieu and Mazarin—the diplomacy of a Fleury, a Choiseul or a Vergennes, had seen without difficulty that English power had been built up at the expense of France and that it was to the interest of France to overthrow it. But with him this traditional idea became a personal obsession as he came to appreciate the extreme difficulty of coming to close quarters with England and as the humiliation of his pride exasperated his hatred; the tenacity of the English resistance wounded him like a direct insult, which was indeed his way of looking upon all opposition. In May, 1806, he said: "*With my France, England must naturally end by being no more than an appendage; nature has made her one of our islands like Oléron, or Corsica.*"

Its application

The event proved the attainment of this "*natural end*" to be more distant, more difficult than he had imagined. Irritated, he grew obstinate. Impotent to reach and reduce England within her own gates, failing to interest Europe in his quarrel or to secure her voluntary co-operation against "*perfidious Albion*," he was led on by degrees to conquer all Europe in order to isolate his intractable foe and destroy her by inanition.

This conquest, intended to bring the Continent under his sole domination, became an object for its own sake and he set about it as a whole only with the more alacrity in that the ruin of England was one particular incident in the enormous project.

The procedure of Napoleon

In the meantime, there were not a few instances in which Napoleon might have been able to make his pretensions acceptable or to give at any rate a less unfortunate impression, if his procedure had been less insulting and his manners less crude; but he bore himself to foreign governments no otherwise than to his own. He used no different language to their diplomats than to his own ministers. If anything happened to annoy him he became at once surly, rude, sometimes gross. The *coup de force* was his habitual weapon in flagrant disregard of the rights of nations, of international good manners, of the sentiments and the interests of the men whom he attacked. His "*eternal I*" here, too, supersedes the rules and usages commonly accepted in relations between sovereigns. His annexations themselves were supported by reasons so irregular as to be a permanent scandal to the chancelleries of his time. If examples are asked for, here are two taken almost at random. On the 27th of December, 1805, he proclaimed: "*The dynasty of Naples has ceased to reign; its existence is incompatible with the repose of Europe and the honour of my crown.*" On the 10th of December, 1810, he wrote to the Senate: "*New guarantees having become necessary to me, the union to the Empire of the mouths of the Escaut, Meuse, Rhine, Ems, Weser and the Elbe have appeared to me to be among the first and the most important. . . . The union of the Valais is a foreseen consequence of the immense works which I have had carried out for the past ten years in that part of the Alps.*" When, on the 13th of December, 1810, he took Holland from his brother Louis and annexed it, like other countries, he asserted as a geographical justification for his action that the country is nothing but an "*alluvial deposit from the rivers of the Empire!*"

B. *The stages of the Napoleonic domination*

If there is a single principle which directs his territorial encroachments and differentiates between them it is the following: he believes it necessary to possess himself of countries which may serve as strategic or commercial bases for the English on the Continent. In other cases he is content to demand money and troops. He thus distinguishes between his *subjects*, his *protégés* and his *allies*, as did the Senate of the Roman Republic in the past; but all, under whatever name they find themselves connected with him, must obey him, and he does not allow neutrality: he who is not with him is against him and he who is against him is, or should be, his legitimate prey.

Its crushing weight on its supporters

In places where his domination is direct it becomes overwhelming. He has less concern still for his foreign subjects than for those in France; where it is indirect, it is still heavy and at the best harassing, impatient, exacting, subject to the most unexpected caprices. In spite of his genius, much and deservedly admired as it was, this harsh domination made him the object of universal hatred. Every new war which he made marks a stage further towards a tyranny more exacting in a vaster empire. Very soon other sovereigns found him *unsociable*, but for a long time they saw no practical way to get rid of him, and the efforts which they made to that end recoiled on themselves. No sooner did he totter than they were upon him like a pack of hounds, with their enthusiastic peoples behind them.

C. *Logical division of the reign*

In other words, *Napoleon, till the end of the Russian campaign* (December, 1812), *controlled the general politics of Europe; afterwards they controlled him.* His reign is thus divided into two main periods—that of *victory* and that of *defeat.*

Why France followed Napoleon

At first sight some surprise may be felt that France, which had welcomed the government of Napoleon only for the prospects of peace which it held out, should have followed him into courses of costly adventure which she could not for long believe demanded by her own interests. This enigma can be understood if it be remembered how, by his adroitness in raising the hatred for England, the "*perfidious,*" handed down in the France of the Revolution, with the gravity of a dogma, he was able for several years to keep his subjects under persistent illusions as to the spirit of his personal policy: this he represented as solely inspired by the necessity of defending the Empire against the machinations of a faithless foe. Afterwards he made war no longer with the conscious aid of the nation but on his own initiative, through the recruits which he demanded and which she far from willingly accorded. With these indeed he built up an organism which was wholly his own, a great professional army in which *esprit de corps*, contempt for the *civilian*, devotion to the emperor, love of glory and hope of promotion supplanted the civic and patriotic feeling of the preceding period.

II

The imperial army

A. The stages of its history

The imperial army was not *one* army. Distinctions can be drawn, in discussing it, between the different epochs in which it is viewed. Between 1803 and 1805, on the basis of the consular army and about 400,000 recruits from France, Napoleon built up the *Grand Army*, coherent, solid, of the highest spirit, altogether a magnificent military instrument which neither Austria, Russia nor Prussia were able to resist. He destroyed it in the Spanish adventure of 1808. In 1809 he made use of what remained of it as the nucleus of a new army far less homogeneous and solid. This army dealt with Austria, though with great difficulty. In 1812, desirous to face the Russian colossus with a duly proportionate army, he drew largely on contingents from his subjects and allies: this gave him quantity but not quality, his best troops being swamped, owing to their small numbers, in the general mass which compulsion alone could set in movement. He obtained from it results much inferior to those yielded by the earlier armies and defeat was fatal to the cohesion of its monstrous hordes. Lastly, in 1814, reduced to French resources alone, he had in hand an army too improvised, too young, as far as too many of its effectives were concerned, and also too small, but brave, bold and impelled by an ardour which recalled the great days of the patriotic defence of 1792.

Characteristics of this army

Even The Grand Army was no longer *national* in spirit; the army of 1809 was still less so; but the ill-assorted assemblage which Napoleon drove into Russia was a rabble horde that was worthy of the Great King of ancient Persia. These armies were in no way any embodiment of France. She continued to live an almost normal life while they fought far from her frontiers.

B. *Recruiting in France*

Yet she suffered from the recruiting for these armies. Napoleon did not alter the general lines of the *Jourdan law* which had established conscription in 1798, but he applied it in his own way; that is to say, as he thought opportune for the moment. Every year he decided what number of recruits he needed. A drawing of lots determined the list of young men who had to go among those of the *class;* that is to say, in principle, those who were over twenty on the 1st of the January of the year (since 1806 the old Gregorian calendar had replaced the revolutionary calendar) those upon whom *the lot fell* might provide substitutes in their place; they applied to *a dealer in men* who, charging a sum varying with the district and the year—it was commonly between 1500 and 4000 francs—provided substitutes. The demands of the emperor differed greatly from year to year. Thus in 1803 he demanded 120,000 recruits; in 1804, 60,000; in 1805, 210,000; and in 1806, 80,000; the same number in 1807; in 1808, 240,000 and so forth. The total was about 2,403,000 for the whole imperial period. Taken by themselves the figures do not appear excessive, but they show us only one side of Napoleon's methods of recruitment: the emperor came to keep his soldiers far beyond the five years of service which the law obliged them to give; or, after he had dismissed them, *he recalled them to the colours:* thus in 1805 he recalled the classes of 1804 to 1800, in 1808 the classes of 1809 to 1806 and the like. Another method which he simultaneously employed is that of *calling up in advance.*

Tyrannical and arbitrary

No man fit to bear arms can count on the least security. Does he escape the lot or is he bought out? A recall of his class exposes him to be taken or compels him to buy himself off again. Has he served and obtained his dismissal? He can be compelled to go again. It is for this reason that the imperial recruiting became so unpopular and produced so many "refractories" whom the gendarmes hunted and the local authorities often secretly favoured. It is by this indirect resistance that the mass of the French population, particularly in the country, marked its alienation from and aversion to the Napoleonic belligerence. If he had been content with engaging mercenaries it would probably have shown no feeling whatever.

The National Guard

In 1812 the National Guards were reorganised in the unavowed but indubitable intention of putting hands on young men not yet incorporated in the army of the line and of recovering soldiers who had been discharged. Men of from twenty to twenty-six were subject to the first call, those of twenty-six to forty to the second, those of forty to sixty to the third. Thus the whole male population found itself militarised up to the threshold of old age. In 1813, Napoleon revealed the plan behind this organisation by mobilising a portion of the National Guard and sending them to fight in Germany.

C. *Aspects of the army of Napoleon*

Military novelists are always ready to bring the *Guard* into action (about 100,000 men in 1810) a picked corps, in high favour with the Master, a model and example to others;

or else they deal with *the Grand Army* between 1805 and 1808; but this is only to consider two aspects of the army. As a whole it is little in keeping with the ideas which the common run of novelists give us, and it is equally unlike those which we might form for ourselves about the chief instrument of action of such a conqueror as Napoleon.

Uniforms

It is provided with uniforms of infinite variation, brilliant and magnificent in appearance, but heavy, inconvenient and far from practical in use. These drawbacks are counteracted by the fact that, as the military administration soon finds, it is impossible to equip, and particularly to clothe, the troops in accordance with regulations. The fine uniforms are carefully put aside for parades and the soldiers are usually clad in such stuffs as come to hand regardless of their colour.

Administration

It is straitly ruled by strict regulations, but these, in many essential points, are often ignored. Pay, for instance, is very irregularly issued, deliveries of supplies in the field are uncertain and, by 1805, the soldier habitually supplies himself by marauding. The officers can only turn a blind eye. The contractors and armament firms rob the State as much as they can; commanding officers, too, often imitate them and fill the gaps in their treasuries by requisitions, exactions and pillage at the expense of the country through which they are passing.

Discipline

Discipline, excellent in regard to purely military matters, is subject to more or less frequent and serious lapses in everything else: respect for the persons and property of non-combatants, behaviour and self-restraint outside the service and so forth. The soldier is brave in the extreme, he is animated with a warlike spirit, which no strain can discourage, devoted to the emperor, on occasion with generous and good-hearted impulses, yet he comes gradually to adopt the swashbuckling ways of the *soudard* (the old campaigner).

He fights for love of his profession, through his admiration for the chief, whose word in an inspiration, and for victory, through professional pride. From the time when the army had been the nation in arms for its own defence he has, however, retained a kind of democratic spirit which links and unites the officer with the soldier and is an element of considerable strength; it supplies, in fact, the lack of really rigorous discipline.

Equipment

One point is surprising indeed; this army, which so soon became notable for such mobility in manoeuvres that Napoleon could say that he waged war with the legs of his soldiers as much as with their arms, supple in rapid evolution as none other before it, hardly made any techincal improvement whatever. It seems probable that Napoleon himself took no interest in such questions and did not even grasp their importance. The minds of the men of his time were not devoid of inventiveness; ingenious ideas for practical improvements in the equipment of his troops were in fact put before him; he did not give them a second glance. Some new weapons, quick-firing guns in particular, were shown him, but did not obtain his attention; he retained the cannon of Gribauval of 1765 and the musket of the 1777 pattern almost unimproved. When Fulton offered him his steamboat, an appliance which might have enabled him to effect his famous landing in England and to fulfil his dearest hopes, he failed to understand it and he discouraged the inventor. Prone as we are to imagine him as bold in innovation, he had in him a substratum of hatred for anything new and of tenacity in acquired habit, which is nowhere more clearly exemplified than in the material organisation of his army.

Quality of the troops

Nevertheless, under his command and in his hands, until the huge number of his effectives defeated its own object in 1812, this army served him well. It attained the ends which he assigned to it and proved generally superior to the troops by which it was opposed.

III

The Victory

A. *The rupture of the peace of Amiens* (May, 1803)

Almost from the day following the peace of Amiens, the difference of opinion between Paris and London became accentuated afresh. The freedom of the English press exasperated the First Consul. He imagined, too, that the English ought to expel from their country all refugees, emigrants, *ci-devants*, obnoxious to himself and uniformly characterised by him as "conspirators." He showed himself exacting, but, indeed, the English government did nothing to meet his views. Moreover Malta and Egypt should, under the terms of the treaty, have been evacuated by the English troops and were not; Bonaparte complained. The English, in return, alleged against him his policy of encroachment in Italy, Switzerland, Holland, Germany; in this she was encouraged by Prussia and Russia, unknown to Bonaparte. Nor did he know that the English party which desired the preservation of peace, the party of Fox, was merely a minority and that commercial and industrial opinion in England did not consider the conditions of Amiens acceptable. After a long exchange of recriminations and of notes, at first bitter, afterwards menacing, the rupture took place. It had seemed inevitable since the 17th of May, 1803, when the two ambassadors had quitted their posts. It was consummated on the 19th of May, after the English fleets had seized, without declaration of war, two French merchant vessels in the Bay of Audierne. On the 20th of May, Bonaparte announced war to the Legislative Assemblies. It is true that the sole responsibility for this outcome did not rest with him; England had taken the first irretraceable step. But he had made no whole-hearted attempt to avoid it, indeed the reverse.

The camp of Boulogne

He immediately announced that he should resume the old Directory project of a landing in England. He began huge preparations on the coast of the North Sea and the Channel, especially at Boulogne. It is, however, doubtful whether he had any real intention of making the attempt, which in any case would involve great risk: to convey an adequate army to the opposite coast would have necessitated complete control of the crossing point for at least a week. There was no likelihood that this good fortune would be given him and the naval force at his disposal was insufficient to compel it. "The camp of Boulogne" may well have been merely a pretext for the calling-up and organisation of a large army in view of the continental war, whose approach he perceived and which he desired.

The Third Coalition

Russia had been dissatisfied almost as much as Austria with the creation of the kingdom of Italy whose crown he had conferred upon himself (March, 1805), an operation followed by the annexation of the Ligurian Republic to France (June): For nearly a year she had broken off diplomatic relations with Napoleon (August, 1804). She came to an understanding with England (April, 1805), and Austria joined the alliance (August). Prussia remained neutral while the various German States (Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden), fearing to be overwhelmed, turned at first towards France. *The Third Coalition had been formed.*

Capitulation of Ulm

War began in September, 1805. Napoleon made a quick riddance of Austria. He brought back the Grand Army eastwards from the coast of the North Sea, and drove it by forced marches upon Germany. He fell upon an Austrian army commanded by *Mack* on the upper Danube in the district of *Ulm* (beginning of October). A series of able manoeuvres blockaded the Austrian in the fortress and compelled him to capitulate (October 20). Less than a month later (November 13) the cavalry of Murat entered Vienna. This speedy and hardly contested success was far from settling the question: the Russians had not given in, they concentrated in Moravia; the Archduke Charles arrived with an army from Italy; Prussia, urged on by the Tsar, mobilised. If the Russians had had the patience to wait a few weeks Napoleon might have found himself in an extremely critical position: being well aware of this he sought for a speedy decision. Alexander I, who believed himself certain of victory, offered him his opportunity at *Austerlitz* (December 2, 1805). The result was a wonderful victory for the French army, justly one of the most famous won by Napoleon. Two days later the Emperor of Austria requested an interview; the remnants of the Russian army were retreating towards the North; Prussia, instead of joining the Coalition, signed a treaty of alliance with Napoleon at *Schoenbrunn* (December 15) and received from him Hanover, the personal property of the King of England. On the 27th, Austria made peace at *Presburg* at the cost of the cession of Venetia to the kingdom of Italy, of Istria and Dalmatia to France and of sundry territories to the German allies of Napoleon.

Battle of Austerlitz (December 2, 1805)

Treaties of Schoenbrunn and Presburg

Napoleon, free to do as he pleased in Germany, conducted a complete reconstruction of the country between the 10th of December, 1805, when the Duke of Bavaria was proclaimed king, and the 6th of August, 1806, when Francis II [1] renounced the title of German emperor. Napoleon had suppressed the Holy Empire "*on the grounds of its complete inefficiency,*" had abolished the sovereignty of a host of petty princes, whose minute States he grouped under the rule of a few outstanding sovereigns; the King of Bavaria, the King of Württemberg, the Grand Duke of Baden, whose families became united to the imperial family by various marriages. He had formed the German States of the South and the West into a *Confederation of the Rhine* of which he himself became *Protector* (July 12, 1806). Meanwhile he had taken the kingdom of Naples from the Bourbons, allies of the Russians and the English (December 26), had given it to his brother Joseph (January) and

Reorganisation of Germany

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[1] In 1804, Francis II, already *Emperor*—that is to say, head of the Holy Roman Germanic Empire—had taken the supplementary title of *Emperor of Austria;* in 1805 he called himself *Emperor of Germany and Austria.*

had turned the Batavian Republic into a kingdom for his brother Louis (June 5). *Thenceforward he regarded himself as the Emperor of the West, the legitimate successor of Charlemagne.*

Negotiations with England and Russia

A sea fight, won by Nelson over Villeneuve and the Spanish admiral, Gravina, at *Trafalgar*, not far from Cadiz, on the 21st of October, 1805, had ruined French hopes of direct action against England, or, at any rate, had postponed them until the war fleet of the Empire could be reconstituted; Napoleon would have willingly come to terms with England and Russia. Both appeared ready to lend a favourable ear. Pitt had just died (January 23, 1806) and Grenville, his successor, had entrusted foreign affairs to Fox who had long been in favour of peace. The tsar, on his side, sent to Paris a diplomatist, named *d'Oubril.* Napoleon made the mistake of attempting to play off one set of negotiations against the other: he was unaware that the tsar did not think himself beaten, or that he had induced the King of Prussia to change sides (who knew, moreover, that Napoleon was quite ready to take Hanover back from him in order to facilitate an approach to England) and that Prussian diplomacy was making him its tool. In quick succession the tsar refused to sanction the treaty which d'Oubril had concluded on the 20th of July (August 15). Fox died (September 13) and the war party regained the upper hand in London; finally Frederick Wilhelm III, King of Prussia, addressed an ultimatum to France (September 26). On the 8th of October Napoleon announced the new war as let loose by Prussian "*delirium.*" In reality, he was taken unawares by a complication which was not in his plan, and which was originated, it appears, by Queen Louise incited by the Prussian military party.

Their failure and rupture with Prussia

B. *The Fourth Coalition*

The agreement between England, Russia, Sweden and Prussia forms what is known as *the Fourth Coalition.* Of this Napoleon at first had the better by the twin victory of *Jena,* won by himself, over Hohenlohe, and of *Auerstaedt*, won by Davout on the same day (October 14, 1806), over the aged Brunswick, who was fatally wounded, and over the King of Prussia. In one month the Prussian State was laid low. The whole of its troops that were then on the west of the Oder had capitulated. On the 27th of October Napoleon entered Berlin. The king and queen had hastily betaken themselves to Old Prussia within range of the Russian army. The latter had concentrated in Poland. To bring it to terms, a most onerous *winter campaign* was needed marked by the sanguinary battle of *Eylau* (February 8, 1807), fought in fog and snow; in the evening the Russians retired, though not really beaten; *a spring campaign* followed in which the tsar counted on bringing in Austria afresh. It disappointed his hopes, ending in the battle of *Friedland* (June 14) which was for him a defeat. He resigned himself and made overtures for peace (June 21).

Battles of Jena and Auerstaedt (October 14, 1806)

The campaign of Poland

Battles of Eylau and of Friedland

An interview, outwardly extremely cordial, took place between Napoleon and the tsar upon a raft moored in the middle of the Niemen on the 25th of June. Alexander is said to have begun by saying: "*I hate the English as much as you do!*" and Napoleon answered: "*Then peace is made.*" These utterances, though perhaps not authentic, illustrate at any rate the trend of the negotiations of *Tilsit* which led to the treaty of the 8th of July. Napoleon desired to make this compact a weapon in his war on England; the tsar was to offer his mediation to reconcile her with Napoleon; in event of failure in this he would enter into alliance with the emperor. Prussia was to pay the cost of the war. Napoleon, at the solicitation of his new friend, Alexander, consented to receive Frederick William to mercy and to leave him four provinces (Old Prussia, Pomerania, Brandenburg, Silesia). The remainder of the Prussian States went to form the duchy of Danzig, the grand duchy of Warsaw and the kingdom of Westphalia, given to Jérôme Bonaparte (August 18) and attached to the Confederation of the Rhine.

The treaty of Tilsit (July 8, 1807)

Napoleon would offer his mediation to Turkey, then at war with Russia, on the same conditions as those accepted by Alexander in regard to England. These Conventions of Tilsit, as a whole, figure as a veritable treaty for the partition of Europe: the East to Alexander, the West to Napoleon; but neither of the two signatories was wholly sincere: each only awaited his opportunity to cheat the other or to make use of him without being made use of.

C. The Continental blockade

From that time onwards Napoleon bent his mind to a vast economic attack upon England, based on an old idea, proposed indeed with more or less precision as long ago as under the Convention and the Directory. It proceeded on the assumption, confirmed by experience, that England could not be directly attacked in her own country; its object was to confine her within it by cutting her off from all communication with the Continent. It had not been enough to prohibit the importation and sale of English merchandise throughout the Empire (April, 1804, and April, 1806) and to compel subjects and allies to conform to this prohibition; it was necessary that the organisation of any such inverted blockade should be so widely extended and strictly applied as completely to strangle all English trade. After the treaty of Schoenbrunn, Prussia joined this "*Continental System*" (March 28, 1806). The English admiralty retorted by declaring "*all ports from Brest to Hamburg*" in a state of blockade and closed to neutrals (May 16), a disproportionate measure, for effective blockade could not in practice be applied to more than a few of the whole number.

The decree of Berlin (November 21, 1806)

Upon this, Napoleon decided to issue the *decree of Berlin* (November 21) which is regarded as the starting-point of the "*Continental Blockade*": it prohibited "*all commerce and all correspondence*" with the British Isles now placed "*in a state of blockade*"; even neutral ships were not to be admitted into ports of the Empire if they had come from English territory.

From that time on, whenever Napoleon was to conclude a treaty of peace or alliance, he stipulated for adherence to the "Continental System." He had determined to induce Denmark to accept it and was preparing to put military pressure upon her when, by a violation of the right of nations as indefensible as the most odious which can be alleged against Napoleon, a squadron under the English admiral, Gambier, proceeded to bombard Copenhagen and burn the little Danish fleet (September 1-5, 1807). The effect upon Europe was quite other than that expected by the authors of the outrage. The tsar broke with England; Denmark and Austria joined in the "Continental Blockade." The English admiralty was stubborn; it obliged, under pain of capture, every neutral vessel sailing in European waters to touch at an English port there to receive a sort of passport (November 11).

The decrees of Milan (November-December, 1807)

Napoleon replied by the *decrees of Milan* (November 23 and December 11) which declared that any neutral ship which obeyed the English injunction should be "*denationalised,*" considered as English and as a lawful prize. The entire Continent found itself, whether it would or no, under durance to the System.

The application of the blockade

It was easy to make decrees, easy to inscribe decisive measures *upon paper* and upon paper to provide against and suppress smugglers and contrabandists; to put them into practical effect was a much harder matter. Too many individual interests made common cause to elude the blockade regulations; the use of colonial products had become a matter of daily habit; cotton, sugar and coffee, for instance, had become articles of prime necessity; cloths, tools and machines supplied from England formed an important proportion of the current necessities of life even in France. In countries less favoured by soil and climate it was still harder to do without them. The imperial government endeavoured, but without success, to grow cotton in Provence; it encouraged the culture of flax and of hemp; it even took in hand that of the sugar beet; it developed dyeing plants. The blockade, from one angle, by exciting invention, by the stimulus given to research and the use of national resources, did some service to the country. It none the less caused a grave economic crisis, and much painful restriction. Napoleon could not impose *even upon Old France* a strict observance of the provisions of the System and he went so far as officially to authorise its infringement; he sold *licences* to trade with the English in exceptional cases and for special reasons. It could be said that his soldiers at Eylau were clothed with cloth from Leeds and shod with boots from Northampton. In 1810 the issue of *licences* was regulated and became general instead of exceptional.

Political consequences

The principal drawback to the "Continental Blockade" was that it could not possibly succeed unless the whole Continent were effectively closed to English goods; let but one port be open and they would get through, more slowly indeed and in less than normal quantities, but freely enough to prevent the attainment of the object in view—the suffocation of England by plethora. Smugglers, more or less favoured by the benevolent inattention of neutral governments, were able to establish secret storehouses, close to the land frontiers of the Empire, for English products which would then find their way in under some disguise or other. All this was known to Napoleon, who, to deal with it, found himself driven to multiply annexations, to seize every postal organisation, to advance his frontiers and to be continuously more exacting in regard to the economic policy of his allies, all well aware of the *licences* issued by himself. In this way the "blockade" added largely throughout Europe to the motives for hatred of the emperor.

The question of Portugal

Since the beginning of the eighteenth century (treaty of Methuen, 1703) Portugal had had economic ties with England who, through her, had found an entry to the Continent. It was this entry which Napoleon now sought to close. The little kingdom had no intention of becoming embroiled with the potent emperor and desired nothing better than to come to terms with him; but Napoleon had other views. He came to an understanding with Spain for the partition of Portugal (treaty of *Fontainebleau*, October 27, 1807) which he had occupied by a small French army under Junot (November). Meanwhile a larger number of troops, commanded by Murat, gained entry to Spain ostensibly in support of Junot, actually on the lookout for any opportunity which might occur for sharp practice.

The Spanish complication

The country, in which Charles IV reigned, was actually ruled by Godoy, his minister and the queen's favourite, a man of far from unexceptionable character who had made many enemies. The king's son Ferdinand, himself no paragon of virtue, resented Godoy's power; he provoked a military demonstration, a *pronunciamento* at Aranjuez, where the king was in residence (March 18, 1808): Charles IV was obliged to dismiss the favourite and abdicate in Ferdinand's favour. Five days later, Murat entered Madrid. The chance had come; in the anarchic state of the Spanish royal family and government a stray crown might well be picked up. Napoleon thought it easy; he had not the faintest idea how strong Spanish patriotism could be in resistance; nor had he any inkling of how formidable the Catholic fanaticism of her people might make her, in the form which it was to assume under the ardent stimulation of her priests and monks. He even persuaded himself that a country containing many ecclesiastics, owning property open to seizure or menace, must inevitably be easy to reduce to subjection. *Never in his life had he made a more fatal mistake.*

The trap of Bayonne

Confiscation of Spain

His detestable plan was energetically carried out. He first enticed the King and Queen of Spain, Ferdinand and Godoy, to Bayonne (beginning of May) on the pretext of arranging an understanding among them. No sooner were they in his hands than he affected amazement at the matters disclosed from which he concluded that neither Charles nor his son were now possible rulers for Spain: the old king was pinned down to his abdication. Ferdinand, called upon to abdicate as well, was sent to the château of Valençay under the guardianship of Talleyrand with an "*escort of honour*" of fifty gendarmes, and Joseph, King of Naples, handing over his own throne to Murat, received that of Spain (June 6) with a Constitution adapted to the circumstances.

Insurrection

In early May, the Spaniards, realising that the French were really invaders, rose in insurrection in Madrid. Soon the whole country was up; the flames of an implacable partisan war were kindled. Little armies were organised and an English expeditionary force, under Wellesley, landed in Portugal to help them (August). The war was a tragedy; habitual pillage by leaders, marauding by soldiers, disguised as penalties upon partisans or as reprisals, attained such proportions as to destroy the morals and seriously impair the discipline of the army.

The first serious defeats: Baylen and Cintra

Soon came resounding defeats: on the 22d of July General Dupont, a first-rate soldier, beaten by numbers, laid down his arms at *Baylen* in Andalusia, with 10,000 men against 40,000. Never yet had any corps of the imperial army been reduced to this extremity; and the humiliation to Napoleon was cruel. About a month later (August 30) Junot, in his turn, capitulated at *Cintra,* near Lisbon, to Wellesley. Joseph had abandoned Madrid (August 1) and Portugal became a base of operations for the English. Frenchmen grew anxious, not only the clear-sighted and thoughtful who had never felt complete confidence in the imperial adventure, but even the servants and familiars of the Master began to lose faith in his star and in the stability of his work. This was the moment of the first abortive conspiracy, which involved and brought internment upon General Malet (June, 1808).

The Grand Army in Spain

Napoleon realised that there was need for a decisive blow; he attributed his failure in Spain to the jealousies which had arisen among his generals; he decided to conduct the war himself and to conquer the country methodically. The Grand Army left Germany and advanced by forced marches upon the Pyrenees. Napoleon had desired Russia to give him a pledge that the organisation which he had given to Germany should not be disturbed in his absence, in order that neither Prussia nor Austria—whose attitude made him anxious—should rise in his rear and stab him in the back. But Alexander, in spite of the encouragement given by the French emperor to his plans for the conquest of Finland and the annexation of Moldo-Wallachia, refused to tie himself down. The interview of *Erfurt* (September 27—October 14) had merely disguised under pompous festivities and profuse demonstrations of friendship the essential misunderstanding between the two sovereigns. Alexander was unwilling to take no further interest in Germany and his dear friend and ally was unwilling to grant him a free hand in Turkey.

The interview of Erfurt

Napoleon left Paris on the 29th of October; on the 5th of December he entered Madrid. The little Spanish armies were incapable of holding their own against him. They divided into scattered bands which harassed and disconcerted his troops and, bit by bit, did them much damage. The reprisals of the French, and their general behaviour, offensive, brutal and gross as it was, exasperated to the utmost a populace until then a stranger to drunkenness and the cynical debauchery which the invaders practised. By January, the emperor, thinking—quite wrongly—that his main work was done, handed over the command to Soult and returned to Paris (January 23). He had discovered that Talleyrand had betrayed him at Erfurt, having surreptitiously encouraged Austria and Russia not to give the pledges desired by the emperor. That supple and scarce scrupulous minister was looking in reality for a way to free France from Napoleon. He had even said as much to Fouché, little as he liked him, and Fouché had entered into his views: neither of

Napoleon in Spain

The Talleyrand-Fouché plot

them now believed that the Empire could endure. They imputed madness and megalomania to the Master and feared that they themselves might be involved in a downfall which seemed to them inevitable and near at hand; they would rather hasten on and have the handling of the catastrophe than be its passive victims. They had thought, it appears, of Murat, a handsome head with fine feathers but small brains, as a substitute for Napoleon. The emperor, on finding out what was going on, was infuriated (January 29) and dismissed Talleyrand, who became his irreconcilable enemy; Fouché, he pardoned, believing him indispensable for keeping the royalist conspirators in check.

The preparations of Austria

By the first months of 1809 it could no longer be doubted that Austria, under the impulse of the Archduke Charles, was preparing for revenge. The tsar, far from dissuading, encouraged him, that he might have a free hand with Turkey; England aided the archduke with subsidies. It was for the liberation of Austria and Germany—upon whose insurrection he counted—that the Emperor of Austria summoned his people to arms. A new sentiment now animated the enemies of France, that of national independence. On the 9th of April the Austrians entered upon the hostilities which opened the *Fifth Coalition.*

D. *The Fifth Coalition*

The campaign

The Grand Army had melted away during its campaign in Spain. Napoleon was now superior neither in the number nor the quality of his troops; only in tactics was he still supreme. A rapid campaign in Bavaria (April 19-23) threw the Austrians back on their frontiers, which were promptly invaded; Vienna was taken (beginning of May). The Austrian army had crossed to the left bank of the Danube, breaking the bridges behind it. Napoleon tried in his turn to cross the river and was repulsed (battles of *Essling* and *Aspern*, May 22). He was obliged to entrench himself in the island of *Lobau* and await reinforcements before risking a second attempt. This, being a surprise, succeeded (July 4-5) and led on the following day to the terrible battle of *Wagram* in which 74,000 dead were left on the field. The Archduke Charles, had he won, would probably have been given support by Alexander I; but beaten he had to rely on himself, with only a worn-out army at his back. He asked for an armistice (July 12) which was followed by *the peace of Vienna* (October 14): Austria had to cede her Illyrian provinces to France and to make territorial concessions to Bavaria, to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and others. In other words, Napoleon, instead of seeking to make peace on a basis of reconciliation, had considered only how best to humiliate and crush the vanquished. Germany had not risen as the Archduke Charles had hoped. But some stirrings within her borders showed the influence upon her of patriotic ideas, while in the Tyrol, at the call of *Andreas Hofer*, an insurrection broke out, very difficult to repress, which evoked for Napoleon reminiscences of Vendée.

The battle of Wagram (July 6, 1809)

The peace of Vienna

E. *The apogée, 1809-1812*

The Coalition had indeed gravely endangered the Empire. Fouché, seeing this, had put himself in a position to meet the event, whatever that might be, working more or less hand in hand with Bernadotte. Both had been for some time suspected by Napoleon of sentiments and actions practically treasonable. The victory of the Master recalled them to apparent obedience and Napoleon affected to have seen nothing of their game. As a matter of fact, never had he been so puffed up with pride, never had he so abandoned himself to his mania for arbitrary despotism as after the peace of Vienna. It is between 1809 and 1812 that he seems, in fact, at the culmination of his power; it is at this time that his ambition, casting off the last scruples and the last suggestions of his past as a man made by the Revolution, rises to the occasion by a policy which identifies him with the kings whom he has so often despised and waged war on those kings who, regardless of geographical limits and human diversities, unceasingly annex all within their grasp and whose only thought is for the increase of their personal domination, the enlargement of their domains. In reality, he is giddy with the height he has attained; his fall is near, though it looks for the moment like triumph.

The year 1810

The year 1810 is that of the divorce and of the Austrian marriage, the alliance of the Corsican, risen from nothing, with the oldest reigning family in Europe; it is the period of the last annexations, the Papal States, Tuscany, the Valais, Holland, the coasts of Germany, raising the number of departments to one hundred and thirty; lastly it is that of the territorial reconstructions in the States given to his relations which show how indifferent the emperor had become to his earlier policy of family advancement. England, widely as she had spread her organisation of smugglers over the Continent, was being slowly strangled; her docks were choked with raw materials. She dominated the seas; she had culled of the French and Dutch colonies as many as she could desire; she had the satisfaction of seeing the Spanish colonies rising against the Spain of Joseph; but while she had evaded the grasp of Napoleon there was little likelihood that she could remove him from her path; her impotence here greatly diminished the advantages which she had gained throughout the world. Russia alone, a doubtful and discontented ally, hampered by the blockade, lax in its observance and inclined to wash her hands of it, still maintained on the Continent her independence in the face of Napoleon. The hour had struck; the insatiable despot, who till then had accepted the existence of two masters in Europe, was now to decide that there must be one alone.

IV

Defeat

A. *The real situation*

Reality, however, did not correspond to appearance. Napoleon was under illusions as to his strength: France was weary of him; his army was wearing out; his generals were tired; his ministers were anticipating and, in case of need, devising his downfall—the disgrace of Talleyrand had been followed by that of Fouché (June, 1810). The régime of coercion and repression which had weighed so heavily upon his subjects, the tyranny, whose strokes descended upon his allies, made him more and more intolerable; finally the general economic situation was becoming extremely difficult. Prussia and Austria secretly and surreptitiously were reconstituting their military forces and their *intellectuals* energetically fanned the flames of their desire for revenge.

1. Spain

Soult in Spain had failed to justify the confidence placed in him by Napoleon. He was to recapture Portugal; but he had been driven from the country and had been unable to prevent Wellesley from entering Spain. Masséna, it is true, had driven the English back upon Lisbon, but had been no more able to force the lines of Torres-Vedras, which covered the town, than Soult had been able to lay hands upon Cadiz, the seat of the *Junta* which directed the insurrection. Suchet had succeeded in pacifying the region of the Ebro. The war dragged on amid the rivalries and quarrels of the generals, a war of attrition and minor actions. A decision seemed still far distant.

2. Russia

At the other end of Europe the storm was gathering. By the end of 1810 Alexander I had decided to break with Napoleon. He had been unwilling to give him his sister, who, in any case, was only thirteen, but he had taken umbrage at the Austrian marriage; he had been offended by the annexation of Oldenburg, the property of one of his relatives; he was weary of the blockade and no longer maintained it; above all, the increase of the Empire since 1807 displeased him, unsubstantial though he believed it to be. Napoleon, on his side, had become convinced that he could hold England at his mercy only when he had brought Russia to her knees.

For more than a year the two emperors, advancing, retiring, exchanging threats, or assurances of friendship, prolonged complications which could only be unravelled by war. Napoleon, by his contemptuous attitude and by the occupation of Swedish Pomerania (January 19, 1812) brought together Bernadotte, now hereditary prince of Sweden, and the tsar, Alexander. Several agreements (from April to July, 1812) united Sweden, Russia and England. At the same time (May 28) the tsar made peace with the Turks and Napoleon missed an opportunity of conciliating the United States which were then embroiled with England (June 18, 1812).

The campaign of 1812

The Russian war, relied upon by Napoleon to complete his Empire, precipitated his ruin. He had been collecting troops for some months when the rupture became official (June) and had massed about 650,000 men on the Niemen which he crossed on the 24th of June. This was too late a date for the beginning of the campaign in a country where bad weather comes so early in the year. Napoleon made two other mistakes: he believed the heart of Russia to lie in Moscow and was thus obliged to advance into a region too remote from his bases of supply; he neglected to follow the wishes of the Poles; that is to say, to reconstruct Poland and at the same time to arrange a good line of retreat in case of unsuccess. He opened a way across the Moscowa at *Borodino* (September 7) losing over 30,000 men and failing to destroy the opposing army; he entered Moscow (September 14) but failed to find there the supplies upon which he had counted, while on the same day the burning of the town began. There could now be no hope of passing the winter in the town and retreat was imperative. It began on the 19th of October and was disastrous. Frost and snow were quick to appear. The retreat had to follow the line of advance, where there was now nothing left to eat. The Russians energetically disputed the way. The Cossacks in hordes harassed the straggling army as it went, massacred or cut off the laggards. When, on the 5th of December, Napoleon quitted his troops at Vilna they were reduced to a few miserable and starving detachments.

The disaster

His Austrian and Prussian contingents had betrayed him. A more appalling failure could not be imagined; 300,000 at least of his men had not returned from Russia.

Its consequences: the rising of Germany

This disaster was the long-awaited signal for the rising of Germany. Prussia was first in the field and the princes called on their peoples to set themselves free. Napoleon did not lose courage: he succeeded in reconstructing a large army and threw it into Germany where the victories of *Lützen* (May 2) and *Bautzen* (May 21) over the Prussians and the Russians in Saxony appeared to have given him the advantage. Austria then offered mediation and Metternich proposed peace to Napoleon on the condition that he kept on the far side of the Rhine; he even accorded him part of Italy. Was he sincere? It is possible. Did he hope that the emperor would refuse and thus give him a free hand? Again, it is possible. However that may be, Napoleon, believing victory to be still within his grasp, refused and Austria joined the Coalition: the *sixth* in number. *He had lost his last chance.*

B. *The debacle*

The battle of the Nations (October, 1813)

A huge battle, joined before Leipzig on the 16th of October, which lasted three days, determined the fate of Germany. The effectives at Napoleon's disposal were greatly inferior to those of the Allies. He was betrayed on the field by the Saxons. He lost about 50,000 men and was beaten. A month later, nothing remained of the Confederation of the Rhine and the French army was thrown back on the left bank of the river. Since June, Spain, too, had been evacuated and on the 12th of December Napoleon restored to Ferdinand his freedom and his crown.

The invasion of 1814

France was stirred to her depths and opinion awoke from slumber. Such constituent bodies as were still allowed some freedom of speech by Napoleon raised their voices for peace. It was still commonly believed in Paris that "natural frontiers" were obtainable: and the Allies, ill agreed among themselves, allowed the belief to pass uncontradicted though they had really resolved on conceding much less, and Prussia, red-hot for revenge, was demanding beforehand large portions from the anticipated spoils. France must still fight on, invaded as she was from North, and East, and South. Napoleon's troops amounted to less than 100,000 men, with little cohesion and mainly with little experience, while the Allies had over 450,000 divided between three armies; yet in the *Campaign in France* Napoleon surpassed even himself: he performed the prodigious feat of holding out for three months, winning brilliant successes meanwhile and finally failing through treason alone. But the adversaries had numbers on their side, they could make good their losses as he could not. He tried hard to negotiate, even in the thick of the fight. Unluckily the least success of his arms, by arousing his hopes, disinclined him for needful concessions, while his enemies, in proportion as they grew surer of victory, became more extortionate in their demands: they mentioned now no wider frontiers than those of 1792. By the *treaty of Chaumont*, England, Austria, Prussia and Russia engaged to make no separate terms (March 9). Their troops poured in over every frontier: by the 12th of March the English were at Bordeaux, on the 19th Augereau evacuated Lyons; on the 30th 111,000 Russians, Austrians and Prussians were before Paris, which capitulated after one day of vigorous resistance. Napoleon continued in action for a few days longer before accepting his fate, to which he resigned himself on the 4th of April. His empire was cut down to the island of Elba, and residence there enforced on him.

The campaign in France

The end

The first liquidation: the treaty of May 30, 1814

The victorious Allies imposed the *treaty of Paris* on Louis XVIII (May 30); less harsh than Prussia had hoped for, it nevertheless confined France to her boundaries of 1792, except for some slight rectifications (Savoy, Avignon and Montbéliard were left her). The territorial work of the Revolution, which might have been permanent to the benefit of the nation and perhaps of the whole Western World, was undone, and a

Congress, meeting at *Vienna*, reconstructed the map which had been so greatly altered by Napoleon; Europe was reorganised in a spirit of suspicion towards France, then regarded as a hotbed of subversive ideas and of agitation which fostered war.

The crisis of the *Hundred Days*

Attitude of the Allies

The adventure of the Hundred Days only increased this suspicion: the country which had welcomed Napoleon afresh and made his cause its own must deservedly be kept henceforward under strict supervision. Just as the reinstated emperor brought himself to give pledges to the liberals at home, he similarly endeavoured to disarm the hatred, to calm the apprehensions of the kings abroad; he was profuse in pacific assurances. No one in Europe believed him, and circumstances were such as to preclude him from delaying the solution by resort to protracted negotiation. At the Congress of Vienna the principal sovereigns or their ministers met; they were all of one mind: Napoleon must not be left on the throne, he must be placed under the ban of Europe. "*He has put himself*," they said, "*outside civil and social relations, . . . as an enemy and a disturber of the peace of the world, he is delivered to public prosecution.*" They sincerely believed that peace must be an illusion as long as the eternal Insatiable was in a position to break it. They needed no lengthy debates to arrive at a conclusion; or any lengthy preparations to take action since their armies had not yet been demobilised. They started to march on France, turning a deaf ear to the unofficial negotiators sent by Napoleon to convince them of the excellence of his intentions.

Waterloo (June 18, 1815)

A short campaign in Belgium ended in the battle of *Waterloo* (June 18, 1815) where the military power of Napoleon was definitely shattered. This celebrated engagement certainly only just missed being a victory for him, but certainly also, it could only have had a morrow of disaster, for France, though her passionate revolutionary patriotism had once more risen to the occasion, was too physically and morally exhausted to bear for long the assault of *the Seventh Coalition.* Behind Blücher had been the whole Prussian army, only part of which had come actually into action; behind the Prussian army the serried ranks of Russians and Austrians were drawing near.

The second liquidation and the treaty of the 20th of November, 1815

Prussia, fortified by the argument afforded by the madness of the Hundred Days, continued to repeat that France was incorrigible, that it was necessary to impose upon her such territorial retrenchments as would make her permanently harmless. The tsar, in accord with Wellington, restrained her impetuosity and moderated her aspirations, but even so, *the second treaty of Paris* (November 20, 1815) sensibly intensified the conditions of the first. The Eastern frontier was thrown open in Alsace and Lorraine by the cession of Landau, of Sarrelouis, Philippeville and Marienbourg; Savoy was restored to Piedmont, and Louis XVIII was obliged to pay a heavy war indemnity to the Allies (700,000,000 francs in gold). A military occupation for five years, effective over the departments of the North and East, whose expenses were paid by France, gave security for the payment of this sum.

Responsibility of Napoleon

Such was the result of the effort which France had been compelled to maintain for twenty-three years. The Duke of Richelieu, who signed the treaty on behalf of Louis XVIII, said that for putting his hand to the pen he deserved to lose his head on the scaffold. It was not he, however, who was responsible for the disaster, but that fatal man who had never seen the country which he had seized, in order, through that seizure, to conquer the world, as anything but an implement of war. He withdrew from the game like a gambler who has lost, humiliated and furious at failure but without remorse and without regret for the ruins heaped up on his road, the man who had actually said to Metternich during the negotiations of 1813: "*To a man like me the lives of a million men are nothing,*" and nothing to him, too, was the fate of the country which could no longer be of use to him. On his departure for Saint Helena he looked for his revenge to the posterity which he did his best to make his dupe by the *Mémorial*, the work of his exile. This revenge he gained. It was won by the legend which was to bury under a magnificent and heroic fiction the appalling atrocity of his real history.

Conclusion

The Empire of Napoleon, overgrown and incoherent in spite of the vigorous administrative efforts made for its organisation, was in reality a *huge anachronism;* it was seven or eight centuries out of date. It had its birth in error, psychological and political: the insanity of treating men of the nineteenth century like the barbarians of the eighth. The day was gone when States could be passed from hand to hand like private properties, when peoples could be shared out like flocks and herds, when it was not even suspected that such things as national affinities or economic solidarity existed. His monstrous patchwork of disparate parts could never endure; it was the delirious dream of a colossal imagination. The system of government—an arbitrary and offensive tyranny, a rigorous and selfish exploitation—only precipitated the inevitable reactions which brought it to ruin. More moderation, tact and altruism might have at most prolonged it for a few years, but in truth had Napoleon possessed these modest and precious qualities he would never have turned Europe upside down and he would have been content to create a powerful and prosperous France within frontiers of reasonable extent.

Quite otherwise, he left in rack and ruin the nation which, when he had wrested it from the hands of the Directory, asked only for peace and the fruits of its labours; he left it diminished, mutilated, with an escutcheon tarnished in the eyes of the world. And, in spite of himself and merely because he had introduced into Europe, from one end to the other, the institutions which he had imposed on France, and had disseminated, in his proclamations, the ideas to which the Revolution had given birth, he had sown the seed of those principles whose fruitage was to transform the world in the nineteenth century. *He had brought about the birth of several nations* and thus it is indeed national sentiment which reacts against him and throws him down. An example may be given: at the end of the eighteenth century there was no Germany. There were only Germans scattered in a multitude of petty States under completely dynastic governments; the patriotism of the great Germans of the time, a Goethe, a Schiller, transcended the uncertain limits of *Germania,* and was extended to humanity; they were citizens of the world. After Napoleon had passed, the miscellaneous crowd of princelings had disappeared—thirty States shared Germany among themselves; community of suffering under the imperial heel had revealed to the Germans their community of sentiment and interest. Their thinkers and writers, an Arndt, a Fichte, a Schelling, gave definite form to this mass of still indeterminate feelings, and the German fatherland is brought to birth, which aspires ardently to live, and draws its first breath in hatred of the oppressor. In 1792 we see subjects resignedly herded into a war of conquest by their governments; in 1813 we behold kings, now become leaders of nations, calling in the name of liberty on men aware of their birthright to defend the country which is theirs. They are armed against the invaders by the promise of institutions which shall realise their liberal and national aspirations. *Thus in 1814, France and her enemies still play the drama of 1792, but the players have exchanged parts: peoples* vindicate and defend their independence against *a government* which has trodden *their natural and imprescriptible rights* underfoot and has sought to subject them to a selfish despotism. The real secret of the defeat of Napoleon and consequently that of the abasement of France lies in this inversion of values.

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CHAPTER XXXV

FRANCE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES (1815-1848). RESTORED MONARCHY (1815-1830).

The development of the internal history of France in the nineteenth century

THE internal history of France from 1815 down to our own time is that of a series of political advances towards the Left and retreats towards the Right; the combined result is a constant advance of democratic ideas, the retreat never equalling or entirely cancelling the advance. This history falls naturally into two periods: 1. From 1815 to 1848 the liberals strive for the final adoption of *democratic principles.* 2. From 1848 to 1875 they strive for *their embodiment in institutions.* All the forces of the past—royal, aristocratic, bourgeois, clerical, Caesarine; that is to say, all political and social powers, all sentiment crystallised into prejudice, all usurpations disguised as natural and legitimate rights—raise obstacles singly or in conjunction to the establishment of democracy. The ignorance and, for a long time, the indifference of the popular masses to political life favour and fortify this resistance.

From 1815 to 1848

The struggle for the adoption of democratic principles also develops in two periods: 1. *The Restoration* (1815-1830) which corresponds to the reigns of *Louis XVIII*, who died in 1824, and of his brother, *Charles X*, who was dethroned in 1830. Opposition to democracy in this period takes the form of a reaction against the Revolution and tends to concentrate all political power in the hands of the king, the aristocracy and the upper capitalist bourgeoisie. 2. *The monarchy of July* (1830-1848) which corresponds to the reign of *Louis-Philippe* of Orléans and gives power to the bourgeoisie.

I

The Restoration

A. ***The return of the Bourbons***

The Bourbons had been re-established on the throne in 1814 because the officials of Napoleon, who had seized control of the government at the moment of his fall and the Allies, then masters in France, could find no other way to establish a régime which the country would accept. In 1815, after the Hundred Days, neither the Allies, who justly held the restored monarchy guilty of having, by its absolute incompetence, made possible or even provoked Napoleon's enterprise, nor the Chambers, with whom authority lay after the abdication of the emperor, because they dreaded, not without reason, retaliation from Louis XVIII, were particularly anxious to restore him to the position from which he had fled on the 19th of March. The tsar, who had never had any love to spare for the Bourbons, insisted upon the risk of giving them any fresh trial from which no good, he argued, could be expected. He would have preferred the Duke of Orléans, for whom Fouché was working and whom Talleyrand accepted. But, while these hesitations continued, Louis XVIII took the initiative and returned to France in the wake of the English army: Austria favoured him as the *legitimate* sovereign and the other Allies accepted the position, with the reservation that he should give definite pledges to the liberals. It was even, for the moment, suggested that he should be forced to do so.

The people of France had forgotten the Bourbons and took no interest in them whatever. They accepted them from desire for peace and because their return meant an end to war; but they were inclined to cast up against them the manner of their return in the "*waggons of the foreigner*" in 1814 and in 1815.[1]

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[1] The invasion of 1815 bequeathed ill memories to France. Fifty-eight of her departments were occupied, and she was obliged for several months to support 800,000 foreign troops, who committed terrible excesses. Wellington called this *"giving the French a great moral lesson."* The return of Louis XVIII remained associated with memories of tribulation which were hard to efface.

And the Bourbons were as incapable of winning the hearts of the people after the second Restoration as they were after the first.

The Ancien Régime is not re-established

While the family which reigned under the Ancien Régime was replaced in possession of the crown, the Ancien Régime itself was not restored. The society founded upon equality established by the Revolution was *theoretically* in no respect modified: neither civil equality nor public liberties, in particular the liberty of the press, were *in principle* contested. The sales of *biens nationaux* (national property), the resumption of which property would have caused an agrarian revolution, were guaranteed and consolidated by Article 9 of the Charter: "*all property is inviolable, no exception being made of that which is known as national, the law drawing no distinctions among them.*"

B. *The Charter*

The Bourbons, particularly the Count of Artois, might possibly in their hatred of the Revolution have attempted to restore absolute monarchy; among the emigrants who returned with them and who had "*learned nothing and forgotten nothing,*" votaries of neck-or-nothing reaction were not rare. The Allies, more clear-sighted and certain that any such indiscretion would promptly produce a second Revolution, imposed wisdom on Louis XVIII and compelled him to accept a Constitution. The king, to save his face, to avoid recognising the sovereignty of the nation, and to appear as granting nothing except by his own free will, after declining to accept a draft Constitution presented to him by the Senate of Napoleon, had promulgated, on the 4th of June, 1814, a *Charter* which he "*octroyait*" (granted) to his people, an old word and an old device which went behind the Revolution and absolute monarchy back to the Middle Ages. The text of this *Charter* had been drafted and engrossed in six days (May 22-27).

The preamble

A lengthy preamble, pompously worded and beginning with the old formula: "*Louis, by the grace of God, King of*

France and Navarre," set forth the principles on which the monarchy was based and defined the intentions of Louis XVIII. "*Providence,*" it ran, "*recalling us to our States after a long absence, has laid great obligations upon us,*" the first being to adapt institutions "*to the present condition of the realm.*"

"*We have considered that, although all authority in France resides in the person of the king, our predecessors have never hesitated to modify its exercise according to the changes of the times.*" Following this example and taking into account "*the ever progressing advance of enlightenment*" and the "*expectations of an enlightened Europe*" and at the same time maintaining, in the interest of the "*peoples*" themselves, whose best security they are, the rights and prerogatives of the crown, the monarch in his wisdom has granted in "*free*" concurrence with "*the wish of the peoples*" a Constitutional Charter which he desires will endure. He urges: "*that it is to the venerable monuments of the past*" that he has gone for his models and his inspiration, to the times before the Empire and the Revolution, which last are dismissed in a phrase which may stand as a perfect example of the ridiculous: "*In thus seeking to restore the continuity between epochs which disastrous derelictions have interrupted, we have effaced from our memory, as we would that they could be effaced from history, all the evils which have afflicted our country during our absence.*" The last lines of the preamble are still more definite: "*Voluntarily and by the free exercise of our royal authority we have accorded and do accord, have made concession, and make grant to our subjects, of the Constitutional Charter here following.*"

Individual liberties

Thus the essential achievement of the Revolution, the condition on which all democracy is based and by which it is justified: the assertion, that is, of the sovereignty of the nation, proved to be revoked and abolished, and the *titre* (heading) relating to the *Public Right of Frenchmen* consecrated merely the rights—and the duties—of individuals, equality before the law and the obligations imposed by the State, individual liberty, liberty of cults, inviolability of property.

The organisation of the government

Meanwhile the Charter provided for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy of the English type, then much favoured by French politicians: an inviolable and consecrated *king*, surrounded by responsible ministers, and entrusted with exclusive *executive power*, entrusted also with the right to initiate legislation. At the same time "*the Chambers have power to entreat the king, to propose a law upon any subject, whatever it may be, and indicate the provisions which they consider such a law should contain*" (Art. 19). *Two Chambers:* one appointed by the king without limitation on the number of its members (*Chamber of Peers*), the other elected for five years on an electoral system not determined by the Charter, but to rest in any case on *a tax-qualification*, no citizens being *eligible* excepting "*those who pay direct taxes of one thousand francs*" and are at least forty years of age, and none being *electors* but "*those who pay direct taxes of three hundred francs*," and are at least thirty years of age (Arts. 38 and 40). No Parliamentary emolument is provided for; so that the deputies elected by the well-to-do can come only from among the wealthy. Power rests with real and personal property and the electoral body does not exceed 90,000 in number. Electors and elected constitute what are known as the *directing classes.* The Chambers vote the taxes and the laws, which become effective only when passed by the two Assemblies and promulgated by the king.

Opposition to the Charter

About the person of Louis XVIII there was no lack of opponents to the Charter, who maintained that the king had no right to consent to any limitation or partition of his authority. "*Every Constitution is a regicide,*" said one of them. Even the members of the Commission who drew up the Charter were not quite clear in their own minds as to the nature of the government which they claimed to be organising, so complete was the inexperience in France of any parliamentary system. For the rest, the text, too hastily determined, left much to be done by the organic laws which were to clarify and complete it. The Count of Artois and his friends believed and hoped that the experiment, which the king desired to make and upon which he seemed set, would be unsuccessful, that the new system would completely fail to work, and that at the end of a year or two there would be a return to the "*natural order of things*"; that is to say, to absolutism pure and simple.

C. *Conditions of political life*

The press

In order to understand the events which are now to take place, it will be convenient to form an idea of the conditions of the political life of that time; they were very different from those of today. Newspapers were far from possessing the influence exercised by our own. They were few in number (three or four for each party). Their circulation was limited (hardly more than 15,000 copies) and their price was comparatively high, every copy having to carry a duty of fifteen centimes; and above all they were not sold in single numbers. They drew their subscribers almost entirely from among the electors and from the towns. In the latter, several persons would club together and share a common subscription. The influence of each separate paper over its readers would be considerable, not being counteracted, so far as they were concerned, by comparison with others, but the readers were never very many. The freedom, moreover, of the press was never more than theoretical under the Restoration: the papers were always under close supervision and restriction. Political propagandism was thus both difficult and slow, and movements of opinion never attained the amplitude or the depth of those of today. As ideas found in the towns facilities for expansion denied them in the country, the urban centres became of great importance, particularly those where industrial workers collected, these taking, as a rule, far more interest in political questions than did the peasantry. Paris, above all towns, exercised such ascendance

Importance of Paris

over France as a whole, that in 1830 it was enough for her to express her opinion and feelings for the whole country to follow her lead.

The parties

In the classes which monopolised political power and are the only ones which, except for the workmen of the large towns, take an interest in public life, parties are formed. Of these it is possible to distinguish three.

1. The *Ultras*

1. The *ultra-royalists*, who as late as 1820 are known familiarly as *the Ultras*, who are *more monarchic than the monarch himself*, and have a horror of everything which recalls the work of the Revolution. They desire to abolish the Charter and return to the hierarchic society of the Ancien Régime. They have nothing but mockery and contempt for *the Rights of Man* and, with their theorists, de Bonald, de Maistre, Ballanche, declare inequality to be both natural and necessary. They understand that it is incumbent on them to do what they can to mould opinion according to their ideas and they are lavish with books, pamphlets and tracts which set them forth. In the end they worked out an organised propagandist system for their composition and dissemination. This became known as the *Good Press.* They obtained support from the clergy whose political and social influence they fostered—this is essentially *clericalism*—and whose efforts to recapture the people they encouraged. Then came the great time of the *missions* which went out to town and village to fulminate against the *subversive ideas* and evil books of the age. The inhabitants raised great crosses in token of their repentance, which in many places still stand, and committed to avenging fires the works of Voltaire, Rousseau and the Philosophers. Diverse religious associations, designated by the liberals under the rather vague name of *la Congrégation*,[2] which worked

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[2] Properly speaking, the *Congrégation* was a kind of religious brotherhood which met weekly in the House of the Foreign Missions in the Rue du Bac to conduct diverse pious exercises under the direction of a Jesuit. *The Society*

in many and diverse social circles, lent enthusiastic service to a secret committee whose chief was the Count of Artois himself. This prince, not overburdened with brains and through and through a man of the Ancien Régime (he said that he would rather be a woodcutter than a ruler like the King of England) recruited partisans among former emigrants, nobles of the old families, manorial lords of the departments.

2. The *Independents*

2. The *Independents* or *Liberals* were partisans of the sovereignty of the nation; they therefore thought the Charter unacceptable in its present form. It should, at the very least, they considered, have been given the form of a contract between the king and the nation. Though not usually Democrats, they regarded the share of power given to the Chambers as insufficient and the number of electors as still too restricted. These liberals formed a highly heterogeneous whole. Their members were drawn from ancient revolutionaries of all shades—La Fayette among them—from Bonapartists, mainly old officers of the imperial army, who were devising and exploiting the legend of "Napoleon the Apostle of Liberty" and from the adherents of the Duke of Orléans. Their one bond of union was opposition to régime and dynasty. Their emblem was *the tricoloured flag*, which was opposed to *the white flag* of the Bourbons. They found many sympathisers in the liberal professions. Had the government been overthrown their profound divergences must have immediately become manifest; as long as it kept its seat they remained united against it. Their opinions being such as could not be openly avowed and maintained, they were driven to resort to *Secret Societies* (the best known of these, modelled on an Italian pattern, called itself *la Charbonnerie*) and to the fomenting of *conspiracies* which, however, were invariably unsuccessful.

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of Good Works, the Society of Good Books, the Society of Good Letters and others independent of the Congregation took more or less co-ordinate action with it.

3. The *Doctrinaires*

3. The *Doctrinaires*, who profess a *political doctrine* whose corner-stones are the Charter and the restored monarchy—Royer-Collard, Guizot, Cousin are the best known among them—agreed in regarding the Restoration, properly understood, as the natural culmination of all French political history and as the system most suitable for France. Are not the rights of individuals respected and political rights reserved for those who by material and intellectual *capacity* are fitted to exercise them with discernment? They are still far from approving the whole Revolution, farther still from wishing that it should continue, but they hold by its essential results which are, they believe, confirmed by the Charter; to the Charter therefore they are firmly attached. They have a motto which shows clearly their fundamental intention: "*To nationalise royalty, and royalise France.*" They are mainly recruited from the upper bourgeoisie who dread such political and social disorder as may be bad for business, from the aristocrats who have learnt wisdom, such as the Duke of Richelieu or from repentant revolutionaries, such as Royer-Collard himself, who had, as a matter of fact, never got beyond the *monarchien* stage and had succeeded in keeping out of sight during the Terror.

The king

The king was at heart with the Doctrinaires, wishing as he said "*to die on the throne.*" Unfortunately, he had not in himself the qualities needful for their effective support. He had never been either brave or energetic or laborious. On the threshold of old age—he was sixty in 1815—he was now obese and impotent; tortured by gout, tied to his armchair by sores in his legs which prevented him almost completely from walking, he lacked the physical energy, the health and the prestige essential for holding his own against the Ultras. He found interest and distraction in trifling literature, little verses, little letters, little translations of Horace and the lighter poets of ancient Rome, in the gossip, scandalous or sordid, which the letter post brought for his eager and senile appreciation, in his love-affair with Madame du Cayla, who was an agent in the service of the Ultras; public business soon made him feel tired and he willingly left it to his ministers. After 1820, when he was obliged to part from Decazes, a Doctrinaire, he let himself promptly be captured by the Count of Artois without, indeed, any illusions as to the probable results of this resignation. He is reputed to have said on his death-bed, thinking of the little Count of Chambord, on whom rested the hopes of the dynasty, "*Charles X must be careful with the crown of this child,*" a phrase which shows how serious were his fears and that he was not without insight.

D. Set-back to democratic ideas

Thus in 1815, except possibly for a few impenitent Republicans now reduced to silence and quite without influence, no person believed in democracy any longer. The *directing classes* returned, in an exaggerated form, to the state of mind of the Constituent Assembly of 1791, agreed to reserve to themselves all exercise of political rights and to exclude from public life all men who were not at least so well-to-do as to be of some *social standing*. The conditions imposed by the Charter reduced the number of electors to about 90,000 and of those eligible for election to about 16,000. It was only necessary to be rich to be regarded as politically wise, competent and enlightened. This, however, was no more than a passing phase; the fatigue and intellectual depression which France owed to the Empire had favoured and momentarily consolidated its establishment; the ideas of the Revolution had none the less been launched into life; they might be forgotten in the very circles which believed they had the best reason to fear them, but they could not be exterminated. When tranquillity and stability have restored prosperity to the country, the taste for politics with the desire to participate in the business of the community will return first to the lesser bourgeoisie whom the Charter has been so unwise as to exclude from political life; they will engage, too, the more enlightened workers in the large towns and this all the more speedily as the government shows itself more and more hostile to liberal ideas. Ten years will not have elapsed before it will become evident that the monarchy of the Restoration could only survive by gradual evolution into a more democratic régime. *Refusing to accept this necessity, it inevitably fell.*

E. *The essential problems*

The essential problems which till 1830 are to supply political controversy with its material are those which the Charter had set but not solved. 1. The problem of *the organisation of the electoral system,* which, according to Article 35, "*shall be determined by law.*" 2. That of *the liberty of the press;* Article 8 was to the effect that: "*All Frenchmen have the right of printing and publishing their opinions, provided that they conform to the laws in restraint of abuse of this liberty.*" A redoubtable formula indeed, and one whose *application in practice* might well reduce the most precious of all public liberties to no more than a principle, in the manner of the Empire. The Ultras endeavoured to modify to their own advantage the wording of the organic laws, necessitated by the Charter, so as to multiply restrictions on liberalism; the two other parties, on the contrary, strove to adapt them to the spirit of the Charter, and, where needful, somewhat to broaden that spirit.

II

The principal events between 1815 and 1830

The sequence of the principal events between 1815 and 1830 is easy to trace, and their development, if the somewhat confused details which obscure it are neglected, will be seen to be strictly logical.

A. *The reaction* (1815-1816)

The state of mind of the Royalists of the emigration in 1815

The men whose indiscretions and blunders provoked the return of Napoleon in March, 1815, and whose want of decision and courage allowed his adventure to succeed, returned from Gand, whither Louis XVIII had fled, filled with hatred for those who had frightened them so badly. Incapable of admitting their own mistakes, or acknowledging their own responsibility, they adopted, as a salve to their self-esteem, an imaginative explanation of the Hundred Days: a huge plot hatched in darkness by friends of the usurper and favoured by the premeditated treason of certain *ralliés* (Bonapartists who had joined Louis XVIII) to whom the king had granted his confidence, was alone to be blamed for the business. "The Conspiracy of the 20th of March" thus became the convenient explanation adopted by the Ultras, and they forthwith called on the royal government to punish the guilty parties, whom they hastened to point out by name. By a proclamation issued from Cambrai, on the 28th of June, 1815, Louis XVIII had indeed promised "*to pardon Frenchmen who had gone astray,*" but he had taken care to exclude "*the instigators of this plot*"; that is to say, the alleged "*conspirators of the 20th of March.*" He might, perhaps, if left to himself, have had the wisdom to abstain from reprisals and strengthen his position by appearing as an indulgent king, but he had not the courage to withstand the wild men who desired that *examples should be made.*

The *White Terror*

The name of the *White Terror* has been given to this violent royalist reaction, let loose in the second half of the year 1815. It has two aspects: one *judiciary*, the other *popular*. By an ordinance of the 24th of July, Louis XVIII indicted eighteen generals and placed thirty-eight persons under supervision, until something better could be done with them. The trials ended in sentences of greater or less severity. General Labédoyère, the two brothers Faucher and Marshal Ney were shot. The execution of Ney, one of the most glorious soldiers of the Empire, was an unforgivable misdeed. Louis XVIII thought to impress the army by this stroke of severity; instead he sowed the seeds of an inexpiable hatred. Ney had indeed rallied to Napoleon's side, after having promised to bring him in chains to Paris; he had done a double wrong in so promising and so rallying, but, in the second case, he had acted

Prosecutions and executions

under the influence of his feelings, and under pressure from his troops, not in prosecution of a premeditated plan as was alleged by his accusers; it would have been politic to grant him a pardon.

Royalist reprisals and revenge in the South

The royalist reprisals took the form of popular movements, particularly in the South. At Marseilles, when the news of the battle of Waterloo arrived, some Bonapartists, returned soldiers, were massacred in the streets. Marshal Brune, passing through Avignon, was murdered by the frenzied populace. Bands were organised, more or less analogous to those which overran the country at the time of the Thermidorian reaction, in the Department of Gard; they committed terrible outrages on persons known for their Bonapartist or Republican leanings, and on Protestants, royalist frenzy being doubled by Catholic fanaticism. At Toulouse, where the Duke of Angoulême, eldest son of the Count of Artois, had just settled, the *Royal Volunteers*, called the *Verdets* (Greens) because they were clad in that colour, which was that of the king's brother, led by emigrants capable of any outrage and supported by a populace in all times highly excitable, rivalled in their zeal the royalists of Nîmes. General Ramel, in command of the town for Louis XVIII, having opposed their disorders and outrages, was killed by them. The royal government did not command or encourage these crimes, but it took no measures to prevent them and did nothing serious to punish them.

The *Chambre introuvable*

The Chamber of Deputies, provided for by the Charter, was elected in August, 1815, under the electoral system established by the Constitution of the year X; but since, as a matter of fact, the Independents generally abstained from voting or were not summoned to the poll; since in the North and the East the elections were conducted under the eyes of the allied troops and in the South under the menace of the White Terror, the deputies were almost everywhere and entirely chosen by royalist electors. *The party of the tricolour*—that is to say, the opposition—had in consequence practically no representatives: five or six at the most. Louis XVIII was at first no less delighted than surprised at this result and declared that here was a "*chambre introuvable.*"[3]

Its spirit and its intentions

His satisfaction was short-lived. He had dismissed the ministers imposed on him by circumstances in 1815, Fouché and Talleyrand, and replaced them by a ministry presided over by the Duke of Richelieu, a former emigrant but reasonable and discreet. The deputies had no sooner taken their seats (October 7) than they manifested royalist sentiments so extreme and so intemperate as soon seriously to disquiet the minister; their one dream and demand was for revenge and reaction. Their glory and their first duty was to be, as one of them phrased it: "*to restore all that the Constituent Assembly had destroyed.*" As a beginning they demanded repressive legislation against the "*conspirators of March,*" legislation which should strengthen the secular power and influence of the Church, their chief ally, and a drastic *purge* of officialdom. Happily the Chamber of Peers, composed of men older and more independent because they had just received their dignity for life under hereditary title, showed a disposition to discourage this reckless enthusiasm. The king and his ministers hesitated for some time to alienate men who protested such whole-hearted devotion to the throne and at first they yielded to their suggestions.

The emergency laws

They proposed accordingly three laws which met with insignificant opposition. *The first,* called that of *General Security,* suspended individual liberty and authorised the detention of all suspects without trial (October 31). *The second* penalised seditious utterances, speeches and writings by imprisonment, deportation or even death (November 9).[4] *The third* established a *Cour prévôtale* (Provost's Court) in each department (an officer and four magistrates), for the trial of individuals within the scope of the law on seditious utterances (December 20). These Provost's Courts displayed much zeal and pronounced many sentences, some capital. The Chamber demanded that all the high functionaries, the prefects, the generals who had served the government of the Hundred Days, the *régicides* (the old Conventionals who had voted for the death of Louis XVI), to a total of about 1200, should be put to death or deported and that their property should be confiscated. The government had much difficulty in refusing these demands and was obliged, at the least, to accede to the exile of the *régicides*.

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[3] "We have found (*trouvé*) the thing unfindable (*introuvable*), which means also incomparable. That is a completely Royalist Chamber in Revolutionary France. The play upon words is hard to transfer to English" (*Historians' History of the World,* xiii, p. 18). "We have parallelled the unparallelled."

Clerical measures

It was impossible to set on foot the electoral law because the majority of the Chamber, bent on using their existing powers to further their reactionary policy, and convinced that rural opinion was on their side, proposed a lowering of the electoral qualification which neither the Doctrinaires nor the ministry would accept. In retaliation, the Chamber, taking advantage of a proposal of the government for the establishment of a rent fund in favour of the clergy, passed a whole series of *clerical* measures: the abolition of divorce; authorisation of the clergy and of religious establishments to receive legacies and donations; the restitution of unsold national property to the clergy; an increase in the remuneration of priests, and so on. It even made preparations for the suppression of the University or, at the very least, for its subordination to the Episcopate.

The dissolution of the Chamber

Louis XVIII, who was not of the "devout," was disquieted by this clerical zeal. He was, moreover, well aware that the

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[4] During the debate upon this law a deputy proposed death as a penalty for the display or the possession of a tricoloured flag. The motion was rejected only by an infinitesimal majority.

Ultras had no affection for himself, finding him insufficiently sympathetic to their hatreds and their furies; his affection for them was no greater. He had said: "*If these gentlemen are allowed to do as they like, they will end by applying their purge to myself.*" Foreign governments, too, began to make urgent representations to him as to the danger incurred by the crown from the persistence in these courses of the *Chambre introuvable.* Their ambassadors commonly believed that the Bourbons in their incurable political ineptitude were rushing headlong to a fresh catastrophe. On the 5th of September, 1816, after much hesitation, Louis XVIII pronounced the dissolution of the Chamber, previously dismissed on vacation on the 29th of April; he thus broke with the Ultras, to their utter stupefaction and great indignation. Chateaubriand, at that time one of them, pathetically exclaimed: "*Let us save the king in spite of himself!*"

B. *The government of the Doctrinaires*

Louis XVIII had yielded to the advice of the Doctrinaires; it was with them that he governed when the elections had given him a Chamber in harmony, to a great majority, with their ideas. Richelieu remained President of the Council, but Decazes, Minister of Police, with whom the king had a friendship, wielded the preponderant influence. When Richelieu, who, while blaming the excesses of the Ultras, inclined rather to their side than to that of the Doctrinaires, had retired (1818) he became leader of the government. His whole endeavour was to give stability to the Constitutional régime. The electoral question was settled by a law which established the elections of deputies on a scrutiny of the lists by an Assembly of the electors meeting in the chief town of each department (January, 1817). Three laws fixed limits to the liberties of the press and provided for its regulation (March, 1819). The vote of the budget was regularised, the army reorganised, the territory liberated from the invader. *There was a renaissance of political life in France.*

Decazes

The progress of the Liberals

Yet it so happpened that the Independents profited by this renaissance. A fifth of the Chamber had to be re-elected each year. At the re-election of September, 1817, the Ultras suffered a fresh defeat: the Doctrinaires secured the majority, while twenty-five Independents were elected, among them some men of talent and authority: Casimir-Périer, Lafitte, Dupont de l'Eure, and others. The result of the elections in 1818 was similar, the Independents gaining twenty fresh seats. La Fayette was elected for the department of the Sarthe. None of the Ultras among the retiring deputies were elected. Decazes was quite willing to follow the movement and govern with the Left; but his ministerial colleagues did not all see with the same eyes as himself. Richelieu retired (December 25, 1818), the king having been unwilling to sacrifice Decazes in his favour. The exasperated Ultras agitated and protested: the Peers were disquieted; the foreign ambassadors became apprehensive in a fresh direction and asked themselves whither the liberalism of the minister to whom Louis XVIII had apparently committed himself, was to carry the monarchy in his train. The Count of Artois did his utmost to intimidate his brother, and, in his capacity as heir to the crown, demanded the dismissal of the minister: the king resisted and conceded him nothing (February, 1818). The Ultras thought of kidnapping Louis XVIII and compelling him to abdicate; one of them, de Vitrolles, who had played an important part in the re-establishment of the monarchy, took upon himself to draft a note secretly transmitted to the allied sovereigns, in denunciation of the growing revolutionary movement threatening France anew. Decazes got hold of the note and published it; and Frenchmen read with indignation how the Allies were implored not to evacuate national territory, but to stay on and stand ready to crush the Revolution.

Diverse anxieties

The setback to Decazes

At the elections of 1819, out of fifty-four seats the ministerial party gained only fifteen, the Ultras four and the Liberals thirty-five; the old Conventional, Grégoire, was elected for Grenoble. There was a terrible to-do in the newspapers of the Right. The fears of the foreign chancelleries increased and Decazes himself felt his footing giving way. He began to re-incline to the Right to which he made some concessions; he prepared to modify the electoral law in such a way as to strengthen the influence of the wealthier electors; he even endeavoured to recall Richelieu to the ministry. The Liberal papers started a vigorous campaign against him. He found himself in an extremely embarrassing position when a brutal crime suddenly created a new situation.

The assassination of the Duke of Berry and its consequences

On the 13th of February, 1820, the Duke of Berry, second son of the Count of Artois, and, since his elder brother, the Duke of Angoulême, had no children, the future heir to the throne, was assassinated by a Bonapartist fanatic named Louvel, who had sworn to exterminate the Bourbons. It was the crime of one man alone, but the Ultras were determined to regard it as a consequence of the encouragement of the Liberals by Decazes. "*The dagger which has slain the Duke of Berry,*" exclaimed one of them, "is a *Liberal idea.*" They launched a furious attack upon the minister. They desired that he should be indicted "*as an accomplice of the assassin.*" The Duchess of Berry and the Duchess of Angoulême besieged the king who was unwilling to abandon Decazes. When he realised that practically no one would support the minister—the Left held him responsible for their recent repulse—he resigned himself, bitterly mortified, requested Decazes' resignation and made him ambassador to London. Richelieu took over the direction of the government (February 20). Thus *the Doctrinaires had failed:* they could not achieve a reconciliation between the monarchy and France. They had merely succeeded in giving the Liberals the means of opposing the monarchy. Their party dwindled away, most of its members joining either the Right or the Left.

C. *The new reaction*

Decazes having departed, Louis XVIII gave way altogether and his brother had his way with the general policy. Richelieu himself, powerless to resist the pressure of the Right, gave in and took his departure in December, 1821. There was no longer room for a moderate party or for conciliation. The game was played out between the Ultras and the Liberals with the fate of the restored monarchy as its prize.

The law of the double vote

Forthwith, the new government, affecting to believe that Louvel's crime was part of a huge conspiracy against the safety of the State, restored, on its own authority, censorship and suspended individual liberty. It then adopted a new electoral law (June, 1820). This is what is known as *the law of the double vote* owing to the two electoral colleges which it established, one in the arrondissement, the other in the department, and because the more highly taxed electors, who composed the second college, voted in both. The elections, to which the government, aided by the clergy, applied every kind of pressure at its command, gave the Right an enormous majority. Out of four hundred and fifty seats the Liberals obtained no more than eighty. Three Ultras, Villèle, Corbière and Lainé, entered the ministry (December, 1820). The reaction, reinforced by a violent clerical campaign, grew stronger and stronger.

Attitude of the Church. The *parti-prêtre* (priestly party)

The Catholic Church now made a great mistake. In its desire to recapture its control over the intellectual and moral life as well as over the religious life of the nation, in its passionate desire to assert its position as first in the State, it declared war upon all liberal ideas and waged it with a bitterness which the parties of the Left were never to forget. They acquired a permanent horror for *le gouvernement des curés* (government by parsons) to them the apex of arbitrary oppression and reactionary tyranny. Though the clergy failed to bring about the sacrifice of the University to their cause, they succeeded in obtaining its subjection to their supervision

(February, 1821) and the relaxation of its monopoly in favour of such "*particular educational establishments as were deserving of the confidence of families.*" Twelve new dioceses were created and the Church was promised eighteen more. The *parti-prêtre* (priestly party) as it was then called, formed by a close alliance between the Right and the Clergy, became for the Liberals the chief peril on the horizon. The failure of the various attempts at emancipation made by Liberals in Europe in 1820 and 1821 made the reaction in France more ambitious and more audacious than ever. It joined in the general repression of European Liberalism by undertaking the suppression by arms of the Spanish Revolution (1823).

The tactics of the parties of the Left

The Left, especially when Richelieu's retirement (December, 1821) had made Villèle and the more inveterate reactionaries all-powerful, could exercise no practical influence upon opinion; the censorship kept a tight hand on their newspapers; a fresh press law (February, 1822) left them defenceless under the drastic measures of the government; in Parliament their opposition, though bold, proved quite barren, and they accordingly betook themselves to agitation through secret societies. At any rate a revolutionary Left wing party was formed among those whose hopes centred on a stroke of force to be engineered by the "Charbonnerie," of which some old Bonapartist officers and some younger Republicans—principally students—had become members. But the plots made in 1821 and 1822 all failed and did nothing but supply the government with pretexts for prosecutions and justifications for its policy of coercion. At the end of 1822 the opposition abandoned a method which they realised was useless and ceased from conspiracy.

Secret societies and plots

The *Chambre retrouvée*

The facile success of the Spanish War gave the ministry courage to dissolve the Chamber (December 24, 1823). The elections, prepared and conducted by well-trained prefects, with a supply of official candidates and with the support of the clergy, deprived the Left of all but fifteen seats out of four hundred and thirty. The old king exclaimed that it was "*la Chambre retrouvée*": [5] it contained two hundred and sixty-four officials of the crown!

Charles X (1824)

Less than a year later, Louis XVIII died (September 16, 1824) and the ringleader in reaction became king under the name of *Charles X*. In private life he showed genuine affability and good-heartedness, but he lacked intelligence and insight; he was obstinate to a degree, his judgment was narrow and his resolution unreliable. For many years, since the accession of his brother, Louis XVI, he had been a party leader. When he reached the throne [6] he was too old to change his ways and become the impartial arbitrator which a king should be. The triumph of the Ultras was more to him than the prosperity of France, and however public opinion might change he could not see that it was doing so.

The reaction grows stronger

The milliard for the emigrants

The law upon sacrilege

"Clericalism"

The reaction, from 1820 onwards, grew stronger and stronger. A new law gave the emigrants who had been dispossessed by the Revolution and whose property it had been found impossible to return without risk of provoking a rural insurrection, an indemnity of one *milliard*, which had to be found by floating a loan and effecting a conversion of the income paid by the State from five per cent to three per cent. The result was to cause discontent among investors and to disturb the buyers of national property who saw in the indemnity a step towards their own dispossession (1825). Another law, *upon sacrilege* (1826), punished theft from a church and any desecration of sacred objects with death. It was but one among many measures demanded by the clergy, who seemed likely soon to invade and dominate every nook and corner of the State. Any one wishing to appreciate what the Liberals know as "clericalism" need only devote some attention to the internal history of France between 1824 and 1828. The partisans of *Gallicanism* took fright, and a member of the Chamber of Peers, the Count of Montlosier, a former emigrant, though an ardent Catholic and a royalist devoted to the Bourbons, published in pamphlet form some ringing denunciations of clerical pretensions and Jesuit encroachments. It was lost labour; the *priestly party* was apparently the stronger and seemed on the eve of its final triumph. Religious liberty in France hung by a mere thread, and a bishop, Frayssinous, was Minister of Education.

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[5] "The Chamber refound"—referring to the previous *Chambre introuvable.*

[6] He was born on the 9th of October, 1757; he was thus 66 years of age.

The failures of the government

Nevertheless the government suffered two reverses. A proposal to re-establish *the right of primogeniture*, passed by the Chamber, was rejected by the Peers (1826), and the ministry was obliged to withdraw a new press law, described by the Keeper of the Seals as a *law of justice and love*, but characterised by Châteaubriand as a "*Vandal law.*" Its intention was to make short work of all "*bad newspapers*" and all "*bad books.*" A heated discussion brought the defenders of the rights of the mind into direct conflict with those who advocated complete restriction of all thought, going, indeed, so far as to demand the total suppression of the press, "*the cherished weapon of Protestantism, of illegitimacy and of the sovereignty of the people.*" This proposal, whose withdrawal was celebrated by the illumination of Paris, is an illustration of the tendencies and intentions of the government of Villèle.

The fall of the Villèle ministry

Yet its very unpopularity disquieted the more enlightened royalists, who feared that it might deal a last blow to the monarchy, still, it seemed, unable to find any firm footing in the country. The king himself was affected by the coolness with which the people received him on his appearance in public. He did not often run the risk. He resolved on a crucial test, in the form of a review of the National Guard (April 29, 1827). He was received with shouts of "*Long live the king!*"

but also with some of, "*Long live the Charter! Long live liberty of the press! Down with the ministers! Down with the Jesuits!*" The next day he pronounced the dissolution of the National Guard, much to the indignation of the bourgeois who composed it. The Left, realising that their task must be to get rid of the ministry, manoeuvred in the same direction as that portion of the Right which had now had quite enough of Villèle.

The minister announced the dissolution of the Chamber (November 5); the elections, thanks to the coalition between the Royalists of the opposition, the Doctrinaires and the Left, were unfavourable to him (two hundred and fifty against two hundred for him). His worth as a financier held him up for a time; but in 1827, when the revenue received fell far below the estimate of his budget, he felt that he had lost his last support, apart from that of the king which by itself was insufficient to govern, and he resigned on the 3d of January, 1828.

The Martignac ministry; disadvantages of its position

Charles X, choosing as his successor a minister from the ranks of the royalist opposition—known as the *Centre-Droit* (Right Centre)—contemplated in this change of persons no change in principles, as he told the new ministers at their first meeting. The majority, on its part, expected a turn by the government towards the Left. For this reason, *Martignac*, who, though not officially prime minister, practically led the Cabinet, found himself gravely embarrassed from the first. His intentions were good, but he realised in advance that he could satisfy no one. And this was in fact the situation. He could not even rely on a steady parliamentary majority. He had hoped to find one in the Centre, like Decazes before him, but only the extreme wings would give him one.

Its efforts

He proposed *a press law* which was not liberal enough for the Left. He then took steps to restrict the influence of the clergy upon education, to prevent the ecclesiastical schools, the episcopal seminaries[7] from changing themselves into colleges open to children not destined for the priesthood, and to expel the Jesuits from those of such establishments in which they had been installed by the bishops: it was the turn of the Right to be indignant and of the *priestly party* to cry out against persecution and the Revolution. The ministers were compared to Diocletian, to Julian the Apostate, and to—Saint-Just! The bishops talked of resistance and only gave way before a "brief" which the king succeeded in obtaining from the pope. Charles X, for his part, proposed to win back the "*constituent power*" taken away by the Charter; that is, to re-establish the principle of absolutism, and he accordingly let Martignac go his own way while he himself awaited his opportunity. He naïvely said to Portalis, one of the ministers: "*The French have desired a Charter; they have got one and I do not think of taking it away, but this Charter cannot possibly prevent me from having my own way!*" On the 6th of August he dismissed the Martignac ministry and replaced it by a cabinet after his own heart and well adapted to his purpose; its head was his personal friend, *Jules de Polignac*.

Projects of Charles X: fall of Martignac

The Polignac ministry

The Left could not for an instant doubt that the government was one which meant fighting; indeed the press of the Right made no mystery of its sentiments towards a Charter which had usurped the rights of the king. Polignac, a son of the favourite of Marie-Antoinette, had naturally been an emigrant. He was an active member of the Congregation, a stout supporter of the *priestly party;* a mystic and even an illuminate. He believed himself to have been specially favoured by a vision of the Holy Virgin, who had descended to confide the salvation of France to his hands and still continued to inspire him. Meanwhile, being neither intelligent nor efficient, he was obviously quite unfit to deal with the difficult situation in which he was placed. This was so evident to those in close touch with the facts that various high officials (the Prefect of Police and some Councillors of State) resigned their appointments in order to flee from the coming storm.

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[7] An ordinance of the 5th of October, 1814, had authorised the bishops to establish ecclesiastical schools in order to provide pupils for their seminaries.

Organisation of Liberal resistance

The Liberals made ready for resistance: many, such as Benjamin Constant in Alsace, La Fayette in Auvergne, in Dauphiné, and at Lyons, undertook propagandist tours which had great success. In Paris, Guizot, a Doctrinaire, La Fayette, the "*Veteran of Freedom*," and Cavaignac, leader of a small republican party which had been formed among workmen and students, came to an understanding, with a view to resisting the anticipated coup d'état. Polignac, indeed, emphatically declared that he contemplated nothing of the kind, but no one believed him. A very small but active *Orléanist party* was formed which, hoping to save royalty, if not the dynasty, secretly undertook to prepare for the transfer of the crown to the Duke of Orléans. Its leaders were Thiers, Armand Carrel and Mignet, three intellectuals, three historians, and its organ was *Le National*, a paper whose first number appeared on the 3d of January, 1830. Talleyrand and the Baron Louis, former ministers of Napoleon, encouraged this Orléanist enterprise.

The conflict between the king and the Chamber

Nothing, however, occurred till March; but the king, when he opened the legislative session and delivered, as usual, his *speech from the throne*, introduced allusions to "*perfidious insinuations*" and to "*malevolence*," adding threats against "*guilty manoeuvres*" which might raise "*obstacles*" for his government. The Chamber of Peers replied quite simply that France desired anarchy as little as the king desired despotism; but the Chamber of Deputies drew up an address which was passed by two hundred and twenty-one deputies against one hundred and eighty-one. It asseverated unexceptionable loyalist sentiments, but asserted quite clearly *the rights of the nation* and contained a phrase which smelt of gunpowder: the right of the country to intervene in deliberation on public interests consecrated as a right by the Charter, "*makes permanent concordance between the political views of your government and the wishes of your people an indispensable prerequisite for the regular conduct of public business. Sire, our loyalty and our devotion compel us to inform you that this concordance does not exist.*" It was, in fact, indirectly a demand for the dismissal of the ministers. On the next day (March 19) the Chamber was prorogued till the 1st of September; on the 16th of May it was dissolved.

The Liberal coalition and the elections

The Liberals of every shade, who had made common cause in the elections of 1827, united their forces afresh for the new electoral campaign. The press of the Right stood up to them; the clergy backed it vigorously, and the king himself, by a proclamation to the electors (June 14), took part in the struggle. The result was disastrous to the government, which won only one hundred and forty-three seats against two hundred and seventy-four gained by the opposition. Polignac was highly surprised. On reflection, he concluded that he could not stand still on his failure.

The resolution of the government

Just then, the expedition despatched against the Dey of Algiers had ended in the capture of that town (July 5). The victory was nothing extraordinary, but the Restoration had had no glut of military glory or success in its foreign policy; Paris, too, showing some satisfaction, the king and his ministers imagined that the affair might give them a popularity great enough to enable them to break the opposition. For some days they hesitated which road to take, while the whole Right pressed them to proceed. On the 14th of July, the Archbishop of Paris assured Charles X that the hand of the Almighty was with him and that his unshakable confidence in the divine help of the Virgin Mary was not to be in vain!

The ordinances of July, 1830

On the 25th of July, four ordinances were signed: the first suspended the liberty of the press and subjected the papers to government authorisation before publication; the second dissolved the recently elected Chamber before it had sat; the third changed the electoral law by establishing a new method of election, by excluding from the total electoral tax-qualification the taxes paid upon patents by the commercial classes, thus reducing the number of the electors to 25,000, finally by reducing the number of deputies to 258; the fourth fixed the date of the next elections. The whole claimed to be justified by Article 14 of the Charter which said: "*The King . . . makes the regulations and ordinances necessary for the execution of the laws and the security of the State.*" But this article was in no way intended to give the monarch any right to change laws and replace them by dispositions of his own invention. Charles X and Polignac were so convinced that their decision would pass unchallenged that they merely published the ordinances on the 26th of July in the *Moniteur*, at that time the official paper, and took no precautions whatever to meet troubles which they did not foresee. The king went quietly to hunt at Rambouillet.

The Revolution

The illegality of the ordinances was denounced by a protest from Liberal journalists drawn up by Thiers on the 26th of July and provoked an indignation which the old "*Charbonniers*" and the various Republican groups made the most of. Barricades began to go up in Paris on the 27th; on the 28th the Revolution was in full blast, to cries of "*Long live liberty! Down with the Bourbons!*" The organised workers and the students joined the ranks of the rioters. Marmont, entrusted with its repression, had not enough troops at his disposal, and the fighting in the narrow streets of the Centre and of the East was all in favour of the insurgents, who occupied the houses and threw furniture and paving-stones on the heads of the soldiers. By the evening, Marmont had lost 2500 men and was retreating to the open spaces of the town; but the Holy

Virgin encouraged Polignac to hold on and the king promised the insurgents the "*most generous pardon*" if they would lay down their arms. They did not lay them down, and, on the next day, the 29th, they were masters of Paris. Charles X announced that he would withdraw the ordinances and change his ministers: he was too late. "*All reconciliation is impossible and the royal family has ceased to reign,*" declared La Fayette at the Hôtel de Ville, where a *Municipal Commission* was spontaneously installed as in 1789.

D. ***The liquidation of legitimate monarchy***

The victors were not of one mind on the use to be made of their victory. Most of the insurgents desired the Republic, but "Jacobinism" was a stumbling-block to the bourgeois; La Fayette, once more in a position to play a decisive part, did not dare to take part, and the small Orléanist party, who had the courage to act, captured the Revolution for the Duke of Orléans, Louis-Philippe, who, said the *National*, will give France the government she needs, "*a Republic disguised as a Monarchy.*" A group of deputies, not quite one hundred in number, invested the duke with the title of *Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom.* He visited the Hôtel de Ville, pathetically embraced La Fayette, draping him with himself in the folds of the tricolour; this theatrical gesture aroused an outburst of sentimental enthusiasm in the crowd, which settled the question forthwith by shouts of "*Long live La Fayette! Long live the Duke of Orléans!*" (July 31).

The old king, who had taken refuge at Rambouillet, made a last effort to save something from the wreck: he began by nominating Louis-Philippe lieutenant-general in his turn (August 1). He then announced his own abdication with the renunciation of the crown by his son, the Duke of Angoulême, and commanded the lieutenant-general to proclaim as king the Count of Chambord, posthumous son of the Duke of Berry (August 3). On the same day an armed demonstration by the Parisians decided him to leave Rambouillet and he travelled slowly to Cherbourg where he embarked for England on the 16th of August.[8]

Louis-Philippe I

On the 3d of August the Chambers met, convoked by Louis-Philippe, who made no mention of the Count of Chambord. A provisional government had been organised. The Chambers decided that the "*throne was vacant*" and that the Duke of Orléans should be "*requested to occupy it*" (August 7). On the same day, the Charter was amended in a manner favourable to the bourgeoisie, by excising the preamble, Article 14 and Article 6, which declared the Catholic religion the religion of the State, and by inserting various promises in respect of juries, the National Guard, the liberty of the press and other matters. Article 67 now ran: "*France resumes her true colours; in future no cockade but the tricoloured cockade shall be worn.*" The new king was to take the title of *King of the French*, which seemed at once more "popular" than *King of France* and more appropriate to the French monarchy which had first arisen, it was represented, in a time of liberty, and one when the king's title had been *rex Francorum.* Louis-Philippe took the oath of fidelity to the Charter on the 9th of August, the official beginning of his reign.

France accepts the new king

The departments, delighted by the reinstatement of the tricolour, willingly accepted the solution proposed by Paris; the roots struck by the Bourbon monarchy were nowhere so deep as to present any serious resistance to their removal: officialdom submitted, the clergy reefed sail to the storm and reached harbour unharmed. The change of régime had been made without any trouble worth mentioning.

Conclusion

The Restoration had done substantial service to France: its very blunders had revived her interest in political life. The fifteen years of peace which it gave had enabled her to revive her economic life and to repair her intellectual resources. A vernal vigour raised her to new heights: romanticism breathed fresh life into letters and the arts, rescuing them from the clutch of dead-alive classicism; science resumed its advance, whose practical applications were on the eve of transforming the world. The first railway concessions date from 1823, 1826 and 1828. Finally the Saint-Simonians have started the idea of a complete and methodical reconstruction of society. One epoch of our history is closing between 1815 and 1830, another is opening.

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[8] He remained there till the end of 1832, when he went to live at Prague. In 1836 he decided to settle at Goritz where he thought the climate was better; he died there shortly afterwards (November 6).

In the Revolution of 1830—*les Trois Glorieuses* (the three days of glory) as the days of the 27th, the 28th and 29th of July were called—the work was done by the Republicans and the Democrats but the profit fell to other hands. The Commission of the Hôtel de Ville had demanded democratic institutions; it obtained them as little as it obtained a Republic. The profits won by the efforts of the workmen and the young Republicans, too few and "*in too small strength*," as Cavaignac remarked, to enforce their will and their programme, were pocketed by the liberal bourgeois, while the government thereupon organised by these *profiteers* was devoted exclusively to their own interests. Yet it did at least confirm the failure of the absolutist reaction and recognise the rights of the nation which the pure Legitimists declined to acknowledge and desired should be consigned to oblivion: it had thus taken the first step on the path which led back to Democracy.

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CHAPTER XXXVI

THE CONQUEST OF DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES. THE MONARCHY OF JULY (1830-1848)

I

The new monarchy

The interpretation of the Revolution of 1830

CONTEMPORARY opinion does not, in general, appear to have attached to the Revolution of 1830 the political importance since attributed to it. Men did, however, take two views of the significance and import of the movement. One was that it was hardly a *Revolution* in the proper sense of the word, but simply a notice of dismissal to a royal family whose contempt of the Charter had made its tenure impossible in France; that though persons were changed, the régime remained unaltered. The other, on the contrary, was based on the idea that the fall of Charles X showed Restoration principles to be definitely discredited, that the Charter no longer responded to the political needs of the country and could not possibly be regarded as final. In practice, these two divergent opinions were embodied in two antagonistic programmes; one designed *to preserve* the régime, the other intended *to transform* and bring it nearer to democracy, or at least to imbue it with a more comprehensive and more liberal spirit. At the moment, perhaps foreigners saw more clearly than Frenchmen how the intervention in arms of the people, and its decisive influence on the outcome, linked the Parisian rising of 1830 directly to the Revolution. The Liberals of all Europe were seized again by the emotions and enthusiasms which had stirred them in 1789.

A. *Louis-Philippe:* the man

The new king by taking the title of *Louis-Philippe I* instead of Philip VII, which dynastic tradition would have

His rôle during the Revolution

required, wished apparently to inaugurate a new régime. He was fifty-seven, having been born in 1773. The eldest son of the Duke of Orléans, who, during the Revolution, became *Philippe-Égalité* and voted for the death of Louis XVI, he had adhered to the revolutionary movement with no less decision than his father and with a passion, judged almost indecent, except in so far as his youth might excuse it. At that time he was called *Duke of Chartres.* He received a command in the army of the North, under Biron, in 1792, and was one of the lieutenant-generals of Dumouriez. In this capacity he took part in the battles of Valmy and Jemappes. It is improbable that his republican zeal was either sincere or disinterested, or unaccompanied by hopes that he might yet lay hands on the crown which had fallen from the head of Louis XVI. Dumouriez endeavoured, it appears, to help him to this end. When that ambitious general failed in his plans and had to fly to the camp of the enemy, the young prince did likewise, an action which leaves little doubt of his complicity.

His life in exile

During the Revolution and the Empire he travelled and did his best to keep out of sight until his continued protestations of repentance and devotion at last obtained the contemptuous pardon of Louis XVIII. He tried hard, but in vain, for a command in the armies which fought against France, a failure so far fortunate in that it allowed him later to pose as unlike the emigrants and to proclaim his loyalty to the tricolour. He omitted to mention that it was want of opportunity rather than of will which had prevented him from participating in—and profiting by—the coalitions against Napoleon. In 1814 he returned to Paris. Officially reconciled to Louis XVIII, he took the place of a prince of the blood beside him; but he never ceased hoping that he might one day succeed to a position to which the only direct heir, after 1820, was a young child, and which seemed likely to be made a free gift to him by the political ineptitude of the Ultras. He had

Under the Restoration

zealous friends who worked hard for him, but he was careful not to be compromised personally and affected to be wholly engrossed in increasing his wealth. In this he was an expert; but mere financial success could not satisfy his ambition, although he could write, in 1830, to Charles X that he had been dragged "*by force*" from his retreat at Le Raincy and that he would not accept a title to which he had "*never aspired,*" except under compulsion, and then only "*temporarily, and solely in the interests of our house.*"

The king: the appearance he assumes

Outwardly all good-fellowship and freedom, he was inwardly all dissimulation and deceit, without elevation of mind or character, but thoughtful, intelligent, and adroit. He talked much, and so freely as often to be taken for a fool, but in reality he knew very well what he was about, and Guizot, who was well acquainted with him, described him as remarkably tenacious in the pursuit of "*a fixed idea, a permanent resolution and its maintenance or resumption through all the difficulties of varying circumstances.*" He fooled most of his contemporaries by a studied and elaborate informality in manners which he imposed equally on himself and his entourage. He affected the greatest simplicity. On Sundays he might be seen taking a walk, his arm in the queen's, with their children about them like a respectable bourgeois having a rest. His sons attended the lycée and asked for no special privileges. He simplified the palace etiquette of the Bourbons, and took a picket of National Guards for his bodyguard. His whole conduct was adapted to the furtherance of a plan which he considered necessary; his own opinions and predilections were secondary to his interests and his calculations.

His real sentiments

His own taste was for pomp and magnificence; he would, if he could, have been a king after the fashion of Louis XIV and he set much store by the reality of power; but he was careful to avoid the indiscretion of revealing his wishes and intentions. He accordingly disguised them under an assumed reverence for constitutional forms. Convinced that it was to the bourgeois that he owed his throne, he made it his business to conciliate them, affecting to live as they did and trust them without reserve. He made up his mind from the first to be no second Charles X or anything like him, having no wish to go Charles' road; he ruled accordingly in quite another spirit, secularising the monarchy, accepting the tricolour and with it the principles of order and stability laid down by the Revolution. He never mapped out any definite programme; it was indeed his particular weakness to live from day to day and to practise opportunism in all things; but the general line that he took was quite definite—to be always and everywhere "the citizen king," and to demonstrate to those who had accepted him as an incarnation of the "*best of Republics*" that they were right in having done so. It was only as he aged and began to be nervous that the pressure of the Left might take him too far that he allowed his conservative convictions to be seen a little more clearly. He was not the man to work out for himself, in default of a programme, any theory of government or any co-ordinated view of the many political and social questions thrust upon his attention. These he endeavoured to evade far more than to solve.

His political views

Obviously anxious above all things to create no difficulties for himself with foreign chancelleries and to make them well assured that "*a king of barricades*," as he was, he was none the less competent to make France behave herself, it was his constant preoccupation to avoid or assuage effervescence of ideas in his kingdom. His horror of *ideology*, inspired by a practical sense of earth-bound reality, equalled that of Napoleon and had the same origin, the fear of the explosive potentialities of political or social speculation. Unfortunately, with him it was destructive of all idealism whatever, and his government in consequence was always lifeless, uncertain, stagnant, as though limiting its purpose to making itself last. He himself awaited the day when, secure in the saddle at last, he could give free rein to the proclivities that he had curbed for so long and be verily a king. It was his great misfortune to have been over-determined to restrict himself to reality and fact as he understood them, to fail to understand his time as one of intellectual and political revival and to see that a new world was in labour about him. His failure to appreciate this higher reality, beyond the scope of his immediate experience, made him miss his opportunity of being the founder of a new dynasty and commit those irreparable errors, which brought justly upon him the harsh misfortunes which he had endeavoured to avoid with so much care, cunning and indeed duplicity, dethronement and exile.

His errors of observation

B. *Spirit of the new government*

The electoral system

The spirit of the government of Louis-Philippe first revealed itself in the *Charter of 1830* and in the laws which completed it. The Charter, as has been already said, was fundamentally that of 1814, with the excision of phrases distasteful to the nation and the Voltairian bourgeoisie and the articles which proved contentious (Art. 14 on the recognised right of the king to make ordinances for the executions of laws; Art. 6 on the religion of the State). Article 7 abolished the censorship and declared that it was "*never to be re-established.*" The law of the 22d of February, 1831, which lowered the electoral qualification to two hundred francs, raised the electorate to 200,000,[1] or more than double the previous number; the increase in the general wealth was to raise the total to 241,000 in 1847. The majority thus passed into the hands of the middle bourgeoisie. More could hardly be asked from a Chamber elected under Charles X and under the "law of the double vote." The law of the 27th of August, 1831, by abolishing the hereditary peerage, as savouring too strongly of aristocracy, corrected the constitutional practice of the Restoration in the same sense as the electoral law. The ordinance of the 16th of February effaced the "fleurs-de-lys" from the seals of the State and the escutcheon of the king: they were associated with the white flag and followed it in proscription. It was thus shown that while government was still to be conducted under the general principles of the Restoration monarchy, there was a will to make some concessions to the victors of the *Trois Glorieuses.*

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[1] Retired officers and members of the Institute are electors if they pay *half* the usual qualification; namely, one hundred francs. This privilege raises the question of *capability* (*les capacités*); that is to say, the admission without conditions of money into the electoral bodies of citizens who belong to what we know as the *liberal professions.*

The *legal country:* danger for the king

The lowering of the electoral qualification and of that for representatives was not, in the end, of more than moderate practical importance; no parliamentary emolument having been provided for the deputies, the Chamber was still accessible only to the rich. The inadequacy of the national representation, thus caused by too great a limitation of the electorate, is to be crucial for the monarchy of July; it will feel perfectly secure as long as it has a majority in the Chamber and will imagine that all public opinion which matters is on its side as long as it gives satisfaction to *the legal country*—the electors and elected—a disastrous illusion which will cost it dear.

The vices of the régime

The drawbacks of this electoral organisation are easily seen. The electorate is too small, in a country with 35,000,000 inhabitants which is awaking to political life; too much power is given to material well-being and too little to capability. The Electoral Colleges, in many places, have so few members that pressure is easily brought to bear on them individually either by promise or actual bribery. This happens quite often: deputies who have paid heavily for their election seek to recover what they have spent. They put their influence up for sale. They become involved with men of business in risky and equivocal schemes which occasionally end in resounding scandals. Some become mere pedlars for the petty profit of their electors; they are always about the ministerial offices, intriguing in every possible way for nominations and favours to be sold in other quarters. For the rest, many combine their function of representative with various public employments: the large number of these *deputés-fonctionnaires* is a running sore in the monarchy of July and electoral corruption brings parliamentary corruption in its train, and ends in administrative corruption. Guizot was to make these perversions a regular implement of government, undoubtedly in despair of ever suppressing them. Some particularly crying scandals were to make public opinion aware of the gravity of the evil. The best known is that which was to ruin the good name of a former Minister of Justice and of Public Works, a peer of France and a "President de Chambre" in the Court of Cassation, and of a general, a former Minister of War. The first named, Teste, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and a heavy fine; the second, Cubières, escaped with a fine and civic degradation (1847). The reign of Louis-Philippe was thus far from being that of the righteous. To the men who had made the Revolution of July it may with reason have looked like a mere fraud.

II

The parties in the case

From this soon developed a dangerous antagonism to the new government, and conflicts between parties soon grew extremely acrimonious. Of these parties, some supported the new monarchy, others contested even its basic principle.

A. *The constitutional parties*

The constitutional party is wholly composed of *parties ralliés;* that is to say, of those who, men in 1830, had associated themselves with the arrangement devised to support the Duke of Orléans by Thiers, Lafitte and the small Orléanist group which centred upon them and had proved able to seize its opportunity. Of this party, the *National Guard* is the incarnation. Re-established on the 29th of July, 1830, reorganised by the law of the 22d of March, 1831, in theory it comprises all Frenchmen between twenty and sixty but, in fact, enrolls only such citizens as pay a land-tax and only engages for "*ordinary service*" those who are in a position to defray the cost of their equipment: it is *the bourgeoisie in arms*. It has been justly said that it was the characteristic institution of the monarchy of July. It is through it and for it that Louis-Philippe rules; when he finds it forsaking him he realises, as he himself will confess, that he has lost his crown.

Their division

The Constitutionalists are the most numerous and the strongest of the parties concerned. Unfortunately they promptly split into two fractional parts, very different in spirit and tendency. One forms that known as the *party of the movement* whose programme was the discreet and gradual, but as wide as possible, extension of the suffrage and the development of the principles of 1789 in every direction. Though stoutly monarchist, it desires that *the king shall reign and not govern;* that is to say, that he shall leave the exercise of real executive power to ministers chosen from the parliamentary majority. It leans, with moderation but quite definitely, towards *democracy, tempered by bourgeois common sense*. It regards the Charter of 1830 as a *minimum*. When occasions arise for intervention abroad against absolute monarchies, for example, in Poland and in Spain, it will pronounce for action: some tincture of the propagandist spirit of the Girondins survives in it. *Thiers* is to be its favourite minister.

The *party of movement*

The other constitutional faction forms *the party of resistance*. It is essentially *conservative*, has no political consideration except for the well-to-do, dreads the democracy and regards the Charter as a *maximum*. Its programme *at home* is opposed, point by point, to that of the party of movement and *abroad* it holds to a policy of non-intervention, obstinately pacific. *Guizot* is to represent it very exactly

The *party of resistance*

in power and *it is the party of the king who will work for its ascendancy with stubborn persistence.*

B. *The opposition*

Against the government three parties are ranged, unequal in strength and resources but all three irreconcilable in relation to the *Usurper.* They agree in holding that the Chamber elected under Charles X is in no respect qualified to decide on the political system most suited to France, that it is quite unauthorised to act as a Constituent Assembly and that in consequence its decisions are invested with no legal authority whatever.

The *Legitimists*

The *Legitimists,* who claim the throne for Henry V (the young Count of Chambord), are neither numerous nor popular but they are rich, have behind them the strength of tradition, and wield still a substantial influence over the peasants who live on their lands or in the shade of their mansions. They are recruited mainly from the old aristocracy of the Ancien Régime and the great landed proprietors. The higher clergy, who have officially rallied to Louis-Philippe and seek a recompense for their complaisance, remain in great part attached to them.

The *Bonapartists*

The *Bonapartists* have only a few adherents among the *directing classes* and among the better informed, but the retired officers and all the old soldiers of Napoleon are on their side. Their candidate for the throne is the Duke of Reichstadt—the King of Rome, *l'Aiglon*—who dies in 1830. Afterwards it is his cousin, Louis-Napoleon, son of Louis, King of Holland and brother of the emperor. They exploit *the legend of Napoleon,* which represents him as the Supreme Liberal and the Supreme Peacemaker, and profit by the popular discontent provoked by the weaknesses and failures of the foreign policy of Louis-Philippe, who is regarded as the universal apostle of retreat and humiliation in face of the foreigner, *the Napoleon of the peace.* Somewhat unintelligent and commonly ill-led, they have numbers and devotion on their side.

The Republicans are not without sympathy with them, since they, too, take Napoleon for the incarnation of democracy and the champion of liberty.

The *Republicans*

The Republicans, with whom must be joined the Socialists, who now first begin to crop up, are not, in themselves, numerous, but they are recruited from the ranks of the intellectuals; they are as a whole intelligent and active. They take advantage of the grave financial and economic crisis which follows the Revolution of 1830 and makes it hard for the lower classes to live, and they start a propaganda among the working classes in the towns. They win these in large numbers to their side, overcoming their usual apathy by persuading them that it is only by political victory that they can secure a solution of the social question which shall conform to their interests. They are organised in secret societies and their newspapers gradually weld them into a unity.

Possibility of opposition coalitions

The particular danger for the government is, that the three opposition parties may combine, at any rate upon a negative programme, for the overthrow of Louis-Philippe, each reserving its own freedom of action when this result shall be attained. Moreover, there is at least one capital question, upon which Bonapartists and Republicans can agree with Constitutional Progressives, that of the extension of the suffrage and of electoral reform. If this agreement is brought about, the government will be in danger of destruction and in 1848 this will actually happen.

C. *The great political questions*

1. Electoral reform

The political questions, on which the great engagements centre and develop, become finally two: 1. That of *electoral reform;* 2. That of the *line to be taken in foreign policy.* Electoral reform in itself comes under two heads: *reform properly electoral* which consisted in the extension of the suffrage, either by the lowering of the legal qualification, or by the exemption of certain categories of citizens meeting them as, for instance, those who come under the head of *capability* (*les* *capacités*)—this was demanded three times between 1830 and 1847: *parliamentary reform,* either to exclude officials from election as members or at least to reduce their number in the Chamber—this was demanded eighteen times during the reign of Louis-Philippe.

2. The line of foreign policy

As to the question of the line to be taken in foreign policy—which we shall meet with again—the issue in debate was whether the new king, in accordance with the principles to which he owed his throne, should aid such oppressed peoples as were struggling for freedom to gain possession of their rights or whether, for reasons of prudence or political conviction, he should take the side of their oppressors.

D. *Methods applied*

1. By the opposition

The press

The methods employed by the contending parties were many and varied. The adversaries of the government had recourse to parliamentary opposition, at times lively in the extreme, which was the weapon most favoured by the constitutional party of the movement. In pursuit of influence over public opinion they raised the daily press to dimensions hitherto unexampled. It is estimated that in 1825 all political papers together had not more than 60,000 subscribers; in 1847 there were 200,000. In 1836, Émile de Girardin founded *La Presse*, which in two years reached the figure, for that time enormous, of 40,000 subscribers. In the same year Dutarcq founded *Le Siècle*, which soon had 36,000 subscribers. The sale by single numbers remained restricted; but the introduction of paid commercial advertisements enabled the papers to lower their subscription. They attracted the general public by the regular insertion of a *feuilleton;* that is to say, a story which every day left the innocent reader on tenterhooks as to how it would be "*continued in our next.*" The times of the monarchy of July were prolific indeed of inexhaustible and thrilling romances—Alexandre Dumas, Eugène Sue, Balzac. Of the first named *Le Siècle* published *Les trois Mousquetaires* (*The Three Musketeers*) and *Vingt ans après* (*Twenty*

Years After); *La Presse* issued *La reine Margot* (*Queen Margot*). A *feuilleton* of this kind in a paper assured it a ready sale for many months.

Caricature

In 1832, Philippon founded *Le Charivari*, a satirical journal illustrated by the most celebrated draughtsmen of the time —Daumier, Raffet, Deveria and others. *Le Charivari* had emulators, for instance *La Caricature* of the same Philippon, and the pencil of the satirist became actually one more influence upon public opinion. It is he who fixed the type under which the person of Louis-Philippe has been preserved in popular memory: a stout bourgeois with a pear-shaped head, crested with a tuft, and hugging a large umbrella under his arm.

Rioting

The opposition papers often go great lengths in invective, and do not, on occasion, refrain from open incitements to riot. These fall on willing ears: *to go down into the street*—that is to say, to attempt a popular upheaval—is a constant temptation to the Republicans. The result of the Revolution of 1830 is a standing encouragement to them and they know that it is impossible to foresee what may come of the most trifling riot. Their confidence in *direct action* proves, in the end, not ill bestowed. The success of the Revolution of 1848 shows it to be reasonable. The least pretext is enough at that time to raise a tumult with very likely barricades to follow. It is difficult for us, who live in the Paris of today, to understand how this form of agitation could ever have arisen, continued and, above all, succeeded. But the city as we see it is the product of alterations made under the Second Empire precisely with the object of rendering barricades impossible or useless. The Paris of Louis-Philippe was quite unlike that of Baron Haussmann, and, at the present hour, to get some idea of the former one must explore the quarter which lies between the Rue de Rivoli, the Grands Boulevards and the Boulevard de Sébastopol: narrow streets or lanes, turning at sharp angles, flanked by high houses, which an overturned cart, a few casks filled with stones, some furniture weighted with heaps of paving-stones can effectively barricade. Soldiers found advance on such entrenchments difficult under a hail of tiles, household utensils, every kind of rude missile showered on their heads from both sides of a street. Their weapons were hardly more effective than those of the rioters and their conditions precluded any use of the two branches of the service, which since 1871 have always checkmated any attempt at effective street fighting: cavalry and guns. For the former space was necessary and for the latter distance; neither was then available in the east end of the great city.

Conspiracies

The more frantic enemies of the régime do not recoil from conspiracies for the extinction of the king in person. Attempts to assassinate Louis-Philippe were quite common and he said with both spirit and wit that he was the only game which enjoyed no closed season in the year. Numerous secret societies kept antagonism to the monarchy alive and active in the towns. The best known, that of *the Rights of Man*, had 60,000 adherents in 1833.

2. By the government

The parliamentary majority

The government relied for its defence on the sedulous preservation of a parliamentary majority in its favour. Guizot, after 1840, found out how to make one: he worked upon influential electors by judicious distribution of lucrative favours; he seduced elected members (open to temptation, if they were not well off, because they received no parliamentary emolument), by the allocation of good places, of shares in remunerative undertakings in the public works, and in other ways. To counterbalance the opposition press there were journals inspired by the government like the famous *Constitutionnel*, so often made fun of by the caricaturists. Moreover, Louis-Philippe soon reverted to restriction by law of the liberties of the press and of public meeting. The courts passed severe sentences upon delinquents and the government relied on the

The inspired press

The courts

effect of monstrous trials. Thus, after the insurrections of April, 1834, 164 of the accused were tried in one batch by the Court of Peers. This trial caused a great tumult.

Repressive legislation

The government took advantage of the criminal attempts on the king to demand legislation conferring wide powers for repression: as, for instance, after the attempt of Fieschi (July 28, 1835). When rioting broke out it resorted to its troops and to the National Guard. Several thousand soldiers and National Guards lost their lives in the numerous embroilments, some serious, some insignificant, which filled the reign from beginning to end.

Public force

Agitation is great but superficial

Agitation was incessant, at any rate, in the larger cities. Though it caused much bloodshed, it only disturbed, if I may say so, the surface of the nation. The main body below was almost untouched by it, and profited by the external peace which Louis-Philippe so obstinately maintained. For the rest, the king himself did not take the discontent of the opposition at all tragically; he considered that the mutineers were impotent to prevail over the wisdom, the good sense, the satisfaction and the strength of the bourgeoisie who supported him. He had built and, up to the moment of his fall, was building a house of illusion for himself by his trust in the stoutness of French faith in the monarchy and in the strength of his personal popularity.

How the king regards it

III

The principal events of the reign

The two periods

The principal events of the reign fall into two periods which derive unity from the persistence of Louis-Philippe's personal policy: 1, from 1830 to 1840 the king schemes and manoeuvres for the practical monopoly of power, and, without violating the Charter, for supremacy over his government; 2, from 1840 to 1848, having succeeded in this design, he proceeds with a policy of his own.

On the morrow of the Revolution of July it might well have

A. *The first period (1830-1840)*

(a) *The situation in 1830*

been asked if the new government could possibly last. Had it found itself faced by an antagonistic party, excellently organised and energetically led, it might well have been impotent to resist the attack. The Republicans, who quickly repented of having allowed the Orléanist faction to cheat them out of the profits of the Revolution, had thoughts of a *coup de main*, but they were checked by the feeling that, few as they were, they could hardly hope to obtain any durable results; in which they were wise. Louis-Philippe explored the political field of action before deploying his forces upon it: in less than a year he wore out two ministries, both of which, even so, were several times drastically reconstructed. Neither, besides, fell in with his secret inclinations and he had composed them of men of the two constitutional parties, pending the re-establishment of political stability. *Dupont de l'Eure* and *Lafitte*, two partisans of the movement, played the principal parts in both.

The installation of the government

At the very beginning he had proceeded to a vast purge of his officials; this was facilitated by the self-elimination of many of all ranks, through their refusal to take the oath of fidelity to the new government. By this shift, or by dismissal, 120 deputies, 175 peers out of 364, 20 councillors of State out of 38, 76 prefects, 196 sub-prefects out of 277, 14 rectors out of 25 and 65 generals out of 75, without counting a certain number of judges (*magistrats assis*) and a number of public prosecutors (*magistrats debout*) found themselves eliminated. *The law upon sacrilege* was abolished; the bishops were excluded from the great councils of government, and even the chaplaincies of regiments were suppressed. Louis-Philippe severed ties with the past, and avoided compromises such as had proved distasteful to public opinion.

(b) *The first difficulties*

But these were merely negative measures; it was far more difficult to decide on the course which the government should follow, and Louis-Philippe, pulled in different directions by ministers with antagonistic inclinations, did not even know which course to follow in the face of the persistent popular agitation. This became particularly obvious in two instances.

1. The trial of the ministers of Charles X

Agitation demanded the impeachment of the last ministers of Charles X. The government had no sympathy with this demonstration; in particular the capital sentences demanded by the "*combattants of July*" were repugnant to it. The Chamber of Peers, acting as a supreme court, sentenced Polignac and his collaborators to perpetual detention (December 21).

2. The sack of the archiepiscopal palace

On the other hand the anniversary of the death of the Duke of Berry occasioned, on the 14th of February, 1831, a Legitimist demonstration in the church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois. The people reacted violently by an outburst of anticlerical frenzy. The church was sacked and with it the palace of the archbishop, who was regarded as an accomplice. The government was afraid to stop these outrages and, while blaming their authors, threw the responsibility for the affair on Legitimist "*provocation.*" In both cases it gave the impression that it consented to drift and be dominated by events rather than make an effort to control them.

3. Foreign policy

It was also gravely embarrassed by complications in foreign policy. Belgium had revolted against Dutch domination; a portion of the Pontifical States had attempted to shake off the government of the pope and the Liberals of France had called for energetic action, particularly to prevent Austria from bringing the Italian insurrectionaries again under the yoke of their master. Louis-Philippe called upon *Casimir-Périer*, one of the chiefs of the "party of resistance," to form a ministry (March, 1831—May, 1832). He was a man of brains and resolution with a policy of *peace abroad, repression at home.* He intervened in Belgium in concert with England and while he did not give actual aid to the subjects of the pope, he gave Austria clearly to understand that she was by no means free to do as she pleased in Central Italy; he re-

(c) *The Casimir-Périer ministry*

fused, too, to plunge France into a European war in aid of insurgent Poland. He sent to judgment a certain number of men compromised in the troubles which had come from the trial of the ministers, announced the dissolution of the Chamber, and obtained at the elections a strong governmental majority. He was to meet with resistance, conspiracies and riots.

Resistance and results

The most serious of the latter was at Lyons which, beginning with a dispute between workmen and employers on a question of wages, attained the proportions of a veritable insurrection. He held his own against all, settled everything by force, and his intrepid energy was becoming almost too much even for Louis-Philippe, when he died of cholera (May 16, 1832). His character was unpleasing to the king; yet no one could have been more capable than he to carry out the programme of resistance. But his personality was so overwhelming as to leave little scope for the influence of Louis-Philippe. "*Casimir-Périer is dead,*" wrote the king on receiving the news: "*Is it for better or is it for worse? Only the future can tell.*" In any case, the minister had liquidated the situation created by the fall of Charles X and the Revolution of July. The next eight years paved the way for the introduction of the personal policy of the king. They are marked by the crushing of the opposition parties.

(d) *The crushing of the opposition parties*

1. The Legitimists

The Legitimists were the first to be eliminated. They agitated busily, believing that the Revolution of 1830 had merely succeeded by surprise, and that with boldness they might still win the day. But they were too loose of tongue to succeed as conspirators. In February, 1832, having arranged for a forcible onset on the Tuileries, they were so indiscreet as to entertain the chief confederates at dinner in the Rue des Prouvaires; the government, which had every thread of the plot in its hands, arrested the whole band at a blow.

The expedition of the Duchess of Berry

They had a still happier thought: the Duchess of Berry would come to France to claim the throne for her son: she might easily raise the South and the West, the States-General would be convoked at Tours and reinstate the true king. The duchess landed at Marseilles on the 16th of May, 1832. There were slight disturbances in the town, but the South did not budge; she reached Vendée in disguise, but only to fail again, doing no more than provoke one or two unimportant skirmishes (June). Having had to flee, she spent five months at Nantes in a hiding-place whose secret was revealed to the police by one of her own agents. She was captured and interned at the fort of Blaye. Her health soon becoming visibly impaired, she was obliged to confess that she had been secretly married in Italy, after which she brought a daughter into the world on the 10th of May, 1833. Her adventure ended in derision; her part of inconsolable widow and self-sacrificing mother could be no longer sustained. Louis-Philippe sent her back to Palermo. The Legitimists refused to be convinced, affirmed it a calumny and the introduction of a baby a fraud; but the blow was one from which their party never recovered.

2. The Republicans. Secret societies and riots

Next came the turn of the Republicans. They had formed various secret societies: *les Droits de l'Homme* (the Rights of Man), *Les Amis du Peuple* (the Friends of the People), *la Gauloise* (the Gaul), *Le Comité organisateur des Municipalités* (the Committee for organisation of the Municipalities). They profited by the funeral of a very popular deputy, *General Lamarque* (June 5, 1832) to start an embroilment with the police which became in a few hours a general insurrection of Paris. The whole east of the town, on both banks of the Seine, bristled with barricades: the rising was quelled only after three days of street fighting, when it ended in a last stand in the *Cloître Saint-Merri* (June 6). The Legitimists had provided the insurgents with arms and the Bonapartists stood ready to support them in event of success.

The insurrection of Lyons (April, 1834)

The Society of the Rights of Man, still undismayed, intensified its propaganda in the provinces. The government retorted with a law against associations, which put them almost completely at its mercy (March, 1834). At Lyons, where the republican societies and a powerful private society for relief, the *Mutuellisme*, had reached a high development, the new law met with a resistance which culminated in a terrible insurrection (April 9). Ill organised and ill led, it lasted for four days of ferocious and sanguinary strife, only to end in failure. In several towns, such as Lunéville, Saint-Étienne, Grenoble, Clermont, Marseilles, there were sympathetic movements in support of the people of Lyons and some petty disturbances; at Paris an insurrection was attempted, confined to a few streets of the Marais, which ended in a savage repression, a veritable massacre; it is known as *the affair of the Rue Transnonain* (April 13).

Repercussion in other towns

The repression

The government passed a law prohibiting the possession of arms, increased the effectives of the standing army, brought to justice the instigators of the April disturbances (February—December, 1835), and after the *attempt of Fieschi*, whose infernal machine missed the king (July 28, 1835), obtained from the Chambers *the laws of September*. These simplified and lessened the safeguards legally provided for the defence in trials for rebellion, but on the other hand extended and added to the liabilities to prosecution of the press, and reduced the liberty of the opposition and the press to almost nothing. The Republican papers either disappeared or ceased their attacks on the king and the régime.

The Republicans reduced to impotence

In reality, towards the end of 1835, the Republican party is reduced almost to impotence, and while it still conspires, it seems to have decided to abstain from insurrection. The few attempts which were still to be made—for instance, that of the two irreconcilables, *Blanqui* and *Barbès* (May 12, 1839)—were doomed to failure from the start.

3. The Bonapartists. The attempts of Louis-Napoleon

The Republicans being beaten, only the Bonapartists now remained unbroken. Their pretender, *Louis-Napoleon Bona-*

parte, had so far only become known by a few publications in which he had expounded his democratic *rêveries* not untinctured with socialism. He had illusions as to the number of his partisans in the army. On the 30th of October, 1836, he incited the garrison of Strassburg to revolt; a regiment of artillery, whose colonel he had suborned, followed him; but the rest of the troops gave him a bad reception and he was arrested without difficulty. Louis-Philippe treated the adventurer with disdain and put him on board ship for America. He was to return and make a fresh attempt at Boulogne (August, 1840) which was to have no better success and to bring him internment in the citadel of Ham. By 1836 it had been proved that the Bonapartists by themselves were in no such strength as to give the government any serious anxiety.

The victory of Louis-Philippe

The next step for the king was to organise a ministry after his own heart. On this he spent more than three years, during which he was several times obliged to retrace his steps and appear to retire from ground he had won. It was thus that, from February to September, 1836, and later from March to October, 1840, he had to accept a minister, *Thiers*, who asserted himself as leader of the Constitutionalists of the Left. But meanwhile (September 6, 1836—March 8, 1839) he had with *Molé* made an essay with a government foreshadowing that of his dreams which gave him great hopes for a time. But he showed prematurely his desire to be free from any kind of parliamentary party, and to govern, in fact, regardless of the will of the Chamber: a coalition between all leaders of parliamentary parties was formed and overthrew Molé in the name of the rights of Parliament, and it was only when Thiers' second ministry had fallen, by the will of Louis-Philippe, on the Eastern question that the king made an alliance with Guizot, to whom he entrusted, if not the Presidency,[2] at any rate the direction of the ministry, after which he was at last in a position to carry out his personal ideas. He had patiently worn down one party leader after another and he believed that the hour was ripe for the erection of his own fortune on the ruins of theirs.

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[2] Marshal Soult was the President: *"the illustrious sword"* as official circles delighted to call him, *"the illustrious scabbard"* as jesters retorted. Guizot became President on the 19th of September, 1847.

B. *Second period (1840-1848)*

(a) *Guizot*

Guizot was an old *Doctrinaire* of the Restoration time and, at first, Louis-Philippe, who had no love for his like, had recourse to him only because, his ideas upon foreign policy being identical with his own, he thought him especially fitted to effect an honourable escape from the quagmire in which the enterprising policy of Thiers had involved France in 1840. The new ministry was ill-received and hard put to it to hold its own until the time when, in 1842, it dissolved the now definitely hostile Chamber, and obtained, through propitious elections wisely conducted, a majority which represented nothing but was an effective unit. A fatal achievement, in that it threw both minister and king into a trance of fallacious security, concealed from them how unpopular they were growing, and put them out of touch with the desires and the needs of public opinion. A stupid carriage accident, which, on the 13th of July, 1842, cost the life of the Duke of Orléans, heir to the crown, irremediably compromised the fortune of the dynasty. That prince was personally most attractive, most open-minded, liberal and modern: the Constitutionalists had expected great things of him, while his son, the Count of Paris, was then only four years old.

Death of the Duke of Orléans

The policy of Guizot

The government of Guizot has been named "*le ministère de la borne*" (the ministry of thus-far-and-no-farther), an appellation, in fact, appropriate; his ideal, apparently, being to fix the political development of France at the very point where his own programme stopped, and to have nothing to do with reform or change of any kind whatsoever. He imagined that, as the Chamber represented *the legal country*,—that is to say, all who counted in the kingdom,—he need fear nothing which the opposition could do so long as he could secure, by judicious favours, a constant majority in this Chamber. Unfortunately, the system of parliamentary corruption, which he practised, set a bad example, and a number of sensational scandals, interpreted by moralists as symptoms of a degradation in public morals, gave only too much ground for accusations of governing by corruption, brought by the Constitutional Left indiscriminately against the whole ministry. At the same time the foreign policy of Guizot consisting, said the Left, of nothing but capitulations to England, made him highly unpopular. Any pretext for an attack on the minister was good enough for the opposition.

The opposition and the errors of the minister

He could quite well believe that it was only a desire to supplant him, or at most a question of personal animosity against him, the *anti-dynastic* parties in his view being now both impotent and discouraged;[3] but he failed to perceive that the Constitutional members of the party of movement had a clear-cut programme to compete with his own. The resistance he experienced in reality arose from men, not from principles or ideas, and he persuaded himself, not without some show of reason, that this body of bourgeois, anxious above all things for the continued domination of their class, were still deeply attached to the régime which assured it. He failed to perceive the reemergence of a small but very active Republican party, whose paper *La Réforme* had been founded in August, 1843, by an advocate named Ledru-Rollin, or that this party was putting forward, side by side with, and in justification of, its democratic demands, a whole programme of social demands eminently fitted to interest the labouring classes. Nor did he see that in constitutional circles men of ability were appearing who expressed a highly significant sympathy with democracy: Lamartine, Duvergier de Hauranne, Tocqueville. They demanded the framing of a reform programme upon which the different parties could agree. Even the Legitimists, divided among themselves, added an impulse of some value to the democratic effort. One party among them, in pursuit of popularity, loudly demanded universal suffrage. Thus the government found itself more and more alone in the country and its parliamentary majority, which lent it only a semblance of support, remained largely precarious. On several occasions it fell to a few dozen votes.

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[3] Cavaignac had died in 1845 and the most notable Republicans were talking as though they were ready to rally to the constitutional monarchy.

Guizot's attempts to consolidate his position

Guizot endeavoured to make the bourgeois afraid of all change, repeating to weariness that they could look for nothing except from a conservative policy and, though himself a Protestant, made an effort to join hands with the Catholic Church. She still had a great influence over the people and was recovering much of that which she had had over the bourgeoisie since the propertied classes had come to regard her as the born guardian of property against socialist appetites. He was quite ready to grant her the liberty of education which she demanded and would, in fact, have done so completely if she had resigned herself and consented that the Jesuits should not profit thereby; this she declined to do and so obtained nothing. Finally, she gave Guizot no credit for his interested benevolence and remembered only the discomfiture which her own exacting spirit had brought upon herself.

(b) *Blindness of the king:* his confidence

The king and his minister remained deaf to all warnings, of which indeed there was no lack; the royal family, the sons of Louis-Philippe, particularly the Prince of Joinville, and even the queen realised that the country was drifting away from monarchy, as monarchy became more and more identified in its eyes with the régime imposed on it by the present minister. They endeavoured to open the old king's eyes and to bring him to part with Guizot. He would hear nothing of this, for to change the minister would be to change his system, nor was he willing to forego the triumph, the fruit of so much cunning and patience, of confuting Thiers with his still reiterated shibboleth of: "*The king should reign and not govern; if he governs he falsifies the very principle of constitutional monarchy.*" He entrenched himself behind an ostensible respect for the letter of the Charter and as he continued to believe himself popular he forgot that he had been raised to the throne by a more or less accidental surprise, and not in the least by the will of the nation. He met the anxieties of his entourage with a confident smile.

The bourgeoisie desert him

His greatest danger lay in the fact that the bourgeoisie, who had thought themselves masters of the situation, began to realise that it was getting beyond their control, and that the personal authority of the sovereign was little by little becoming consolidated under new forms, and under cover of the official responsibility of an accommodating ministry. The questions relating to electoral and parliamentary reform, which had been long before public opinion, served as a platform for the whole opposition. The first was the subject of a new proposal made by *Duvergier de Hauranne*, the second of a plan by *Rémusat* (March, 1847), both of which were rejected by the ministerial majority of the Chamber. This gave the signal for an energetic campaign.

Circumstances unfavourable to the government

The obstinacy of the government was extremely ill-timed. The finances, till then in excellent condition, were in the throes of a deficit. Foreign politics yielded nothing but mortification; a great Liberal movement was sweeping over Europe, on the east of France, in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, while the stubborn conservatism of Louis-Philippe was leading to a surprising and somewhat discreditable alliance with Metternich, in order to consolidate all that Louis-Philippe, if logical, should wish destroyed: the oppressive institutions which held in bondage the German, Swiss and Italian peoples. Finally, the essential vices of the governmental system of Guizot were shown by some discreditable scandals, in many cases revelations of administrative corruption on the part of individuals, malversations of high officials. Thus the longer the system lasted the more unpopular it became and the more numerous and stronger became the reasons for regarding it with detestation or with contempt.

IV

The Revolution of February

A. The campaign of the opposition. The banquets

The opposition campaign was organised on English lines by a direct appeal to the country and was based on two principal propositions: *the need to realise electoral reform* by extending suffrage; *the need to put an end to corruption,* now developed into a complete system by the government. Banquets were arranged at Paris and in the larger towns, at which the reformist speakers had opportunities of expounding their ideas over the dessert.[4]

The affair of the banquet of the twelfth arrondissement

On the 14th of January, Guizot prohibited a banquet which was to take place in the twelfth arrondissement. The organisers resolved to go forward and to precede the repast with a popular demonstration: the meeting-place was the Place de la Madeleine, whence the guests were to proceed to the hall where the dinner was held, in procession with a crowd of partisans of reform. Guizot prohibited this demonstration as well; the organisers hesitated and finally withdrew, fearing to give the government its chance for a decisive repression, but the members of the organisations which they had convoked attended at the forbidden meeting-place, on the 22d of February. The minister had taken precautions; strategic points in the city were occupied by troops and the demonstration produced no more than a superficial, sporadic and fruitless disturbance. The police were under the impression that the movement was unorganised and that it was ending in complete

The popular demonstration of the 22d of February confusion. By the end of the day Louis-Philippe, completely reassured, was congratulating himself on the evident discomfiture of his adversaries.

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[4] There were altogether seventy. During the same time (first half of 1847) books appeared in praise of democracy which caused a great sensation: *L'Histoire de la Révolution* (History of the Revolution) by Michelet; that of Louis Blanc; and *L'Histoire des Girondins* (History of the Girondins) by Lamartine.

The demonstration of the National Guard on the 23d

Unfortunately for himself, he had a disastrous inspiration. On the 22d of February he had excluded the National Guard from his plans for resistance to the probable riot, possibly because, in Guizot's opinion, it was not altogether to be trusted. For several years general reviews had been abolished so far as it was concerned. On the 23d of February he called it up bodily, undoubtedly with the intention of receiving its assurance, that of the bourgeois which it represented, that it was on his side in the victory which he had just won. This was imprudent. Many National Guardsmen had taken part in the parade of demonstrators on the day before and it was inopportune to offer them a formal occasion for expressing their opinion afresh. Their legions had no sooner assembled than most of them shouted, "*Down with the ministers!*" and "*Long live reform!*" One, the Twelfth, even shouted "*Long live the Republic!*" This was a thunderstroke to the king, an abrupt revelation of danger: the forces of the bourgeoisie were denouncing the very policy which he had thought would most please them! Early in the afternoon he accepted Guizot's profferred resignation and called upon Molé.

B. *The insurrection*

But during the evening, unguided and spontaneously, in disorder and with no definite aim, demonstrations broke out against the fallen ministers. A procession appeared before the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at that time on the Boulevard des Capucines, and came in contact with the infantry detachment on guard. At a shot, from no one knows where, the soldiers lost their heads, fired on the crowd, point-blank, a volley which strewed the ground with corpses. The demonstrators collected these, hoisted them into waggons and, by the light of torches, carried them through the city with shouts of

"*Revenge!*" During the night barricades sprang up everywhere. Louis-Philippe then appealed to Thiers, which meant that he consented to reform. But it was too late. Battle was joined, the Republican leaders took courage and seized their unhoped-for opportunity.

Its success and the abdication of Louis-Philippe (February 24)

Had *Bugeaud*, who commanded the troops, acted with energy he might have put down the rebellion; but he thought there was no hurry and hesitated. He persuaded himself that the announcement of a Thiers ministry would restore tranquillity. The insurgents quickly took the offensive, and marched on the Tuileries. Louis-Philippe, under pressure from his entourage, who represented that nothing short of his abdication could save the dynasty, finally consented to that course, signed a declaration renouncing the crown in favour of his grandson, the Count of Paris, and then made his way to Saint-Cloud.[5]

The Republic

The Duchess of Orléans made an attempt to ensure that the king's last wish should be carried out; she appeared in the Chamber in the hope of obtaining a vote in favour of the establishment of a regency. But the Republican leaders, though the movement had begun without them, had it well in hand; the initiative now lay with them alone, and they had not forgotten the lesson of 1830. They met in the offices of the *National* newspaper and there formed a provisional government, upon exclusively republican lines. This they proposed to the Chamber: while the latter was hesitating, bands of rioters rushed its benches. These, pell-mell, with deputies that had not left their seats, acclaimed the list of the *National* to shouts of "*Long live the Republic! Nothing but the Republic!*" The Duchess of Orléans fled.

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[5] There he only passed through, proceeding to Dreux, thence to Normandy and on to England on the 2d of March. He there took up his abode at the castle of Claremont, which belonged to his son-in-law, the King of the Belgians, whence he died on the 26th of August, 1850. He would never admit that he had made the least political mistake.

Conclusion

Thus, a coalition between the opposition parties and the Constitutional Liberals had, by no will of their own, provoked a revolution, which, against all expectation, had overthrown the king and the dynasty and had prepared the way for the Democratic Republic. The *Monarchy of July* had been no more able than the *Restoration* to attach the people to royalty, and *the attempt to frustrate democracy by means of the bourgeois had failed no less than that made by means of the aristocracy.*

The work of the Monarchy of July: material progress

In other respects the government of Louis-Philippe had been useful to France; it had perpetuated the peace already conferred on her by Louis XVIII and Charles X. It had continued the repair of her economic life: a protective system, tenaciously adhered to, had contributed to the recovery of her agriculture. And, in spite of the defective supplies of raw materials, now become essential, iron and coal; in spite of her backwardness in the adoption of mechanism, now well advanced elsewhere, the country had improved its position in industry. Commerce was to benefit by the transformation in means of communication: it is in 1837 and 1838 that, after sensational debates in which the most absurd prejudices and objections assailed the innovators, the construction of a network of railways was decided upon. Even such men as Thiers and Arago had no faith in this new method of locomotion!

The intellectual advance

In another field, progress had been great: a law, which bears the name of Guizot (May, 1833) had compelled every commune to maintain a primary school; than which no instution could be better fitted to give democracy self-knowledge and make citizens of the country folk, hitherto kept indifferent to political life by dense ignorance. Romanticism had developed its essential possibilities; a reaction was beginning and a Catholic revival of great interest had commenced among the bourgeoisie. Three men, Lamennais, Lacordaire and Montalembert, had essayed to turn the Church into the paths of liberalism and democracy. Their generous endeavour had fallen short of success—Lamennais indeed had withdrawn from the Church—but it had at least indicated aims and tendencies which had ceased to accord with the conservatism and reactionary spirit of the clergy. On the other hand, Socialism, after the experiments of the Saint-Simonian[6] and Fourierist schools, had taken shape in a new formula, more precise, more scientific and more practical than before. It is noteworthy that the date of the *Communist Manifesto* of Karl Marx and Engels is 1847. The Socialist democracy, like the political, has mastered its principles and begins to plan out its future course.

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[6] Saint-Simon (1760-1825) had formed his socialistic system under the Empire; his school had been organised under the Restoration. The government of Louis-Philippe in 1832 conducted a sensational juridicial action against the sect which resulted in its dispersal. Fourier (1772-1835) had a poor opinion of Saint-Simonism: his ideas were the starting-point of interesting social doctrines. In reality, Marx and the so-called *scientific* socialism owed much to these French *utopians.*

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS (1848-1875). THE SECOND REPUBLIC AND THE RESTORATION OF CAESARISM (1848-1852).

General characteristics of the period

AFTER 1848, essential democratic principles will no longer be seriously contested, except by the Catholic Church, which has always refused to admit that sovereignty resides in and is expressed through the will of the people,[1] and has always dismissed as deadly errors the liberties without which true democracy cannot exist. These principles were now to receive an ostensible but illusory application; a new effort was therefore to be needed before stable democratic institutions could be founded, and beyond it another, which even now has not reached its term, before these institutions themselves are inspired by a truly democratic spirit.

Its divisions

Its history, complicated in detail but simple in its main lines, develops in three stages: 1. From the Revolution of 1848 issues the *Republic*, which, however, has not yet struck deep roots in the country and cannot yet do so; the nephew of Napoleon I exploits the legend of the Emperor and snatches power by a stroke of force in 1851. 2. The *Empire*, re-established in 1852, while ostensibly a democracy, is actually Caesarism over again, a military monarchy; defeat in the war with Prussia sweeps it away in 1870. 3. After many disturbances, hesitations, intrigues and even attempts at a restoration of the monarchy, which extend over more than four years, the *Republic* is officially consolidated in January, 1875; and thenceforward evolves into a form which becomes steadily more democratic.

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[1] Very clear declarations upon this capital point are found in the two encyclicals of Leo XIII: *Immortale Dei* (1885) and *Libertas* (1888). All the essential pontifical texts relating to modern political and social life are collected in a convenient work: H. Brun, *La cité chrétienne,* Paris, 1923.

I

The installation of the Republic

A. The state of public opinion

It was Paris which had created the Republic in February, 1848. The new government was accepted without difficulty. It was even welcomed with lively demonstrations of joy in the great towns of the East and South, and in all places where constituted and organised groups of Republicans were ready to take the initiative in these demonstrations. Elsewhere its reception was passive. The adherents of the fallen monarchy were too few to stir up opposition, while the royal administrators attempted none at all. Generals, magistrates and clergy rallied at once to the Republic; the last named even with some enthusiasm. It should not, however, be thought that the mass of the French people was thenceforward converted to the republican idea. The word *Republic* was still commonly associated with dreadful memories of the Terror: the diurnal guillotine and the reign of the assignat. The only real supporters of the new régime were to be found among the working population and the liberal youth of the great towns. Much tact and ability would have been needed to dissipate the apprehensions of the bourgeoisie, already made acute by the menace of socialism, and to rally the peasantry to the Republic. But the men to whom the hazards of the Revolution had provisionally handed over the control of public affairs, had never had any real political education; their conclusions were based upon theory and their incontestable good intentions had nothing behind them but vast inexperience. They were sincerely devoted to the people, and most anxious to do them service, but they knew little about them; a simplicity, most touching indeed but most dangerous, unfitted them to deal with urgent practical problems such as call for a spirit of critical realism in

The men of 1848

consideration and of precision in treatment, instead of an all too common content with sentimental effusions and vague phrases. In these days we can hardly help smiling at those generous, benevolent and optimistic characters, whom we irreverently call—they and their survivors—*les vieilles barbes de 48* (the old whiskers of '48). Their excellent intentions had indeed led them widely astray.

Division among the Republicans

The Republicans did not form a compact party: they were divided into *Democrats*, more or less convinced, *who desired no less than the whole political transformation of France*, by the free play of universal suffrage, and into *Socialists*, who desired, above all things, *a social transformation* by the application of the doctrines of their theorists. The former, remote, for the most part, from agreement with the aspirations of the latter, feared mainly, and not without reason, that the apprehensions which they inspired in the propertied and rural classes might well do great harm to the Republic.

B. *Formation of the government:* Two popular lists

No sooner had the insurrection of February taken a favourable turn on the day of the 24th, than a group of Democratic Republicans, meeting in the office of the *National* newspaper, drew up a list of well-known men, of their own party, with the view of forming a provisional government. It was, with some modifications, made on the spot, the same list as that which Ledru-Rollin got ratified by the mass-meeting of the mob on their invasion of the Chamber.[2] But the Socialist Republicans on their side, meeting in the office of the *Réforme* newspaper, drew up another list; it included the names already on the *National* list—with the exception of those of Dupont and Crémieux—and added those of four men in whom they placed confidence.[3] They then proceeded to install themselves in the Hôtel de Ville, to proclaim the Republic and to organise a kind of municipality in due accordance with revolutionary tradition. The government constituted at the Palais-Bourbon then proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville and consented to something like an amalgamation with the men elected by the Socialists; this being, however, to the disadvantage of the latter, Marrast, Flocon, Louis Blanc and Albert receiving no ministerial appointments but merely the somewhat vague title of *Secretaries.*

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[2] It included the names of Dupont de l'Eure, *"a venerable relic of the first Revolution, a patriarch of democracy"* (Seignobos) born in 1767, of Lamartine, the illustrious poet, of Arago, the celebrated astronomer, of Ledru-Rollin, a very popular advocate and orator, of Marie and Crémieux, two advocates, and of Garnier-Pagès, whose brother, who died in 1841, had been one of the leaders of the Republican party.

The principle of the Republic and the question of the flag

This alliance, intended to please, apparently, everybody or at least to allay the disquietudes which were being manifested in different directions, was no more than a veil to a mass of dissension and in reality settled nothing whatever; it was merely a compromise, an expedient for an emergency. The government drew up a proclamation which declared that it pronounced for the Republic, pending ratification by the people, who were to be consulted immediately (evening of February 24). But the working classes considered that the Republic had already been actually established and its ratification by plebiscite had to be abandoned. As a retort, on the 25th of February, the government declined to adopt the red flag, demanded by the Socialists as a symbol and a promise. Lamartine, by one of those sentimental improvisations of which he was so fond and which were often successful, induced a mass-meeting in front of the Hôtel de Ville to acclaim the tricolour. After a useless demonstration by Blanqui, and a good deal of hesitation, due to the memories of the great Revolution and the fear of the effect which the adoption of the socialistic standard might have in the "*business world*," [4] the government declared for the tricolour; it was agreed that a red rosette should be placed on the staff, an ephemeral concession, now quite forgotten. The Royalists tried to make capital out of the apprehensions of the bourgeois and the peasantry by spreading a report that the guillotine would become the chief means of government: for this reason, the abolition of the death penalty in political cases was announced by proclamation, news received by the crowd, which never left the square of the Hôtel de Ville, with enthusiasm, small as any reflection would have shown its scope to be (February 26). It was, at least, like the decision upon the flag, in due line with the principal preoccupation of the provisional government, to quiet anxieties of all kinds and, if possible, to bring about a fusion between the two Republican parties.

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[3] Armand Marrast, director of *Le National,* Flocon, director of *La Réforme,* Louis Blanc, and a quite unknown workman named Albert.

[4] This was the argument used by the banker Goudchaux, Minister of Finance.

The Commission of the Luxembourg

Unfortunately the workmen were not inclined to keep silent in order to oblige the Democrats, nor to renounce the claims for which they had taken up arms, for the sake of saving bourgeois ministers from embarrassment. They demanded that labour should be organised and a ministry specially appointed for this work. It is very possible that Louis Blanc surreptitiously incited and directed them. The government accorded a *Commission for the workers*, of which Louis Blanc was President and Albert Vice-President (February 28). It proceeded to sit at the Luxembourg and socialist energy ceased to influence the ministers. The Minister of Commerce, Marie, for his part, was compelled to carry into effect a decree of the Provisional Government prescribing "*the immediate establishment of National Workshops*" to provide employment for those out of work:[5] he thought of carrying out various works of embankment on the railway lines of the West and on the course of the Oise. The democratic government was not really sincere in making these two concessions, which brought it censure from all who feared socialism—and it was thoroughly determined to see that the double experiment thus imposed on it should fail, in the hope of disabusing the deluded workers and destroying their faith in Louis Blanc by proving the falsity and impracticability of the theories by which he had led them astray. Marie made no secret of his real views to Thomas the engineer to whom he entrusted the direction of the National Workshops.

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[5] A decree of the 25th-29th of February had undertaken "*to guarantee the existence of workers by means of labour*" and to "*guarantee work to all citizens.*"

Its work

The Commission of the Luxembourg, composed of workmen and employers in equal numbers, became an arena for encounters between different social theorists; it published, by the pen of Louis Blanc, declarations inspired by the doctrines of the right to work and the equality of wages. Its effect was to disquiet the Democrats, to inspire the bourgeois with a horror of Louis Blanc and of all the theories which savoured of socialism, and all the good it did was to settle a few disputes between employers and workmen.

The National Workshops

The National Workshops would have been easy to start; owing to the Revolution, a number of works and factories were lying idle and the many skilled artisans thus thrown on the streets of Paris might have been put to highly productive labour, if work could be provided for which they were fitted. In less than three months, Thomas had to enroll 100,000 men. He soon found that he had no more useful work to give them. He then set them to transport earth from one end of the Champ de Mars to the other, that they might appear employed and not paid for nothing. Occupations like this were not at all those intended by the socialist advocates of National Workshops which were to employ every man at his own trade.

The régime of demonstrations: the government against Socialism

For more than two months the government was bombarded by conflicting demonstrations. Interminable processions presented themselves before the Hôtel de Ville, set forth their grievances and their claims in manifestos prepared in the clubs, which had re-opened with the return of liberty; each must be addressed and sent on its way with promises. The government itself assumed an attitude more and more hostile to Socialism, so much so that Louis Blanc profferred his resignation. Ledru-Rollin persuaded him not to insist upon it. But the workmen were organised and armed, since the National Workshops had been designed upon military lines (the workmen formed *squadrons* grouped in *brigades*, which were composed of *lieutenancies* and these again of *companies* arranged by *arrondissements*) and since the National Guard was henceforward open to all citizens; moreover, the clubs supported the propaganda of the Socialists. It was unlikely that the latter would allow themselves to be eliminated without resistance. They realised that the inhabitants of the countryside and of the lesser towns, who were quite outside their influence and governed by prejudice or by prepossession, would not favour their success, and would not even ensure the consolidation of the Republic. They accordingly demanded that the elections which were to constitute the National Assembly should be postponed as long as possible. But the provisional government realised on its side that it could not indefinitely supplement the laws by decrees, even passed "*in the name of the French people*," and that the Revolution must be ratified by the nation.

The opinion of the peasants

The government had passed some measures which were favourably received: the abolition of the tax upon salt, of the Paris city-toll, of the stamp duties imposed on newspapers. Unfortunately, it did not long benefit by these, because, needing money and having failed to raise it on loan, it was compelled to increase the direct taxes by forty-five per cent. This increase was known as *the tax of the forty-five centimes;* it was highly unpopular, particularly among the peasantry who were more attached to their money than to their principles, and who in several places proceeded openly to resist its collection. The Republic undoubtedly lost ground through the bad impression thus made on the rural communities.

II

The Constituent Assembly

A. Situation in May, 1848

The composition of the Assembly

The elections finally took place on the 23d of April, under universal suffrage for all men of full age. They voted at the chief town of the canton according to the system of *scrutin de listes;* that is to say, every elector had to cast in the ballot-box a list containing names as many in number as the deputies who were to be chosen for the department. The Assembly thus composed met on the 4th of May. It contained about 900 members, of which 800, in round numbers, were Republicans or men who had rallied (*ralliés*) to the Republic but nearly all bourgeois and moderates; barely 100 were for Democracy of Socialist tendency and pure Socialists were in an infinitesimal minority. Even in Paris the Socialist candidates had failed to get in. Ledru-Rollin, Louis Blanc and Albert were elected only in the capacity of members of the government, from lists other than those of the Socialists and upon a total of votes much smaller than that given to the other ministers. The newspaper *Réforme* wrote justly on the 29th of April: "*We expected a bad election, but the result, we confess, has surpassed our expectation.*" In several places the announcement of the results of the poll provoked vehement protests on the part of the workmen. At Limoges and Rouen they went so far as to riot. In the latter town there were barricades, and the repression, of great severity, was a practical example of what recalcitrant labour might expect if it did not accept the defeat inflicted on it by a majority of the electors.

Its spirit

The *Constituent Assembly*, largely composed of new men, honest and without political experience, filled with good intentions but ignorant of realities, seemed ill suited for its rôle of arbiter between parties. It could keep neither its head cool, nor its judgment unbiased in the zone of disturbance through which it was to pass, while it was practically at the mercy of an adroit speaker. Thiers said that it was the only Assembly in which he had ever really liked speaking: a significant admission. About one hundred deputies elected under the influence of the clergy and the Royalist landowners formed the "*party of order*" called by Republicans the "*party of reaction.*" They were fierce defenders of social privileges.

The Socialists

The Socialists, disappointed but not discouraged, pinned their hopes to a new revolution. They imagined, quite wrongly, that France would accept the accomplished fact once it had been imposed on Paris; they could not see that the continued indifference to social and political questions of the peasantry and the bourgeois must vanish as soon as they saw where their material interest lay.[6]

The Executive Commission

The Provisional Government was replaced by an *Executive Commission* elected by the Assembly, which comprised Arago, Garnier-Pagès, Marie, Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin. Surprise may be felt at the presence of the last named, a stout Democrat with well-known Socialist leanings, in a circle of men determined to found a bourgeois and conservative Republic; his election was due to Lamartine who hoped to make him a permanent *rallié*.

B. *The conflict between the Republicans*

The inevitable conflict between the Socialist Republicans and the bourgeois Assembly developed in three episodes.

1. The demonstration of the 15th of May

On the 15th of May a popular demonstration, altogether spontaneous and disapproved of by the leaders, was organised with the object of turning the attention of the Assembly to the fate of Poland. The service of order was rushed and the hall of meeting invaded. In the tumult, extravagant language was used, contrary to the wish of Blanqui and Barbès, who had hastened to the spot to prevent the crowd from "*making a fool of itself*"*:* the dissolution of the Assembly, proposed by a single individual, was received with acclamations by the demonstrators, who proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville, in due accordance with revolutionary tradition, to set up a popular government, but the bourgeois elements of the National Guard, hastily convoked, and with the game in their hands, the "*rioters*" being unarmed, came up and dispersed them. The Assembly had had a bad fright and openly showed it: Blanqui, Barbès, Raspail, Huber, who had started the idea of a dissolution, Albert and the two heads of the service of order, regarded as accomplices, were arrested. Later on (1849) they were brought before a High Court and sentenced to perpetual detention. The moderate Republicans made common cause with the "*party of Order*" against the Socialists.

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[6] The quantity of electors who voted (eighty-four per cent—an enormous proportion—of those enrolled responded to the summons) is explained by a dread of the triumph of the *rouges* (*Reds*) and the *partageux,* that is to say, the Socialists.

2. The suppression of the National Workshops

The latter drew from the Day of the 15th of May the moral that people, when they "go down into the street," must take their arms with them; meanwhile they awaited their chance. It was given them by the Assembly. On the 16th of May, the Executive Commission had suppressed, on its own authority, the Commission of the Luxembourg. After some hesitations and tergiversations, the Assembly decided on *the dissolution of the National Workshops*, a heavy expense for the budget and a menace to "order," ever since the workmen, now with hardly any work and with wages cut down to the point of insufficiency (eight francs a week), had begun to show discontent, talk politics[7] and shout "*Long live Louis Blanc!*" Moreover, the industrialists of the provinces complained that the premium thus given to men out of work hampered resumption of their business by enticing many workmen to Paris. On the 21st of June, the Workshops were abolished by decree, the younger of the workmen employed being enjoined to enlist in the army and the others to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to the provinces where they would be employed upon earthworks.

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[7] Up till then their leaders succeeded in keeping them outside the active Socialist movement and the Luxembourg influence.

On the 22d, workmen attempted by demonstrating to put pressure on the government to reverse this decision, but obtained nothing except threats of what would happen if they resisted. On the 23d, agitation increased and insurrection was brewing.

3. The Days of June

The 24th saw the start of the most terrible street fight which had so far occurred; it extended to all the workmen's quarters of Paris and lasted for three days, the 24th, 25th and 26th. These are *the Days of June.* The government had 50,000 men at its disposal; it placed them under General Cavaignac, who, proceeding methodically, finally cornered the insurgents in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine which he took by storm on the 26th. The bourgeois, for whom he had fought, regarded the insurgents as mere bandits and robbers making an attack on order and property; they did not in the least understand the state of mind of the workmen and they have preserved only a few dramatic episodes embellished with horrible details: for instance the murder of General Bréa, victim of a panic among the insurgents, with whom he was discussing terms, and the death of the Archbishop of Paris, Mgr. Affre, killed by a stray bullet as he was trying to stop the fighting in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

The repression: its consequences

A repression followed, under courts-martial and councils of war. They inflicted diverse penalties: death for the most deeply implicated, transportation to Algeria for the other insurgents, arrested during and after the Days. The liberty of the press was, in fact, suspended, the National Workshops were definitely dissolved, and a stringent judicial enquiry made into the conduct of the theorists held responsible for this "*attack on society.*" Louis Blanc, although he had not approved of the movement, was obliged to flee to England. The Days of June mark a definite rupture between the workmen and the bourgeois. Neither could forgive the other, on the one side for the insurrection, on the other for the repression. The total result is a growing reaction against the Republic among the rural lower classes; they acquire a horror for the *Reds*,[8] while the workmen decline to have anything to do with the "*twenty-five francs*," as they call the *representatives* who receive a parliamentary salary of twenty-five francs a day, in those days a considerable sum.

C. *The government of Cavaignac*

Cavaignac retained the executive power, with which he was formally entrusted by the Assembly, and exercised it through a responsible ministry, chosen, as was natural, from among the conservative Republicans. He set to work to deprive the Socialists and advanced Democrats of all possible means of action; disarming such legions of the National Guard as were composed of workmen, placing clubs under strict supervision, killing popular newspapers by again requiring a deposit as security for good behaviour from every political publication, and evolving a new definition of press misdemeanours which added to their number.

The *Reaction* recovers courage

As need hardly be said, these severities revived the hopes of the *Reaction*, and Royalist intrigues began to make the police somewhat anxious. The government found itself in a situation which recalled that of the Directory in 1795: between two extreme parties and with equal fears of them both. Its apprehensions in regard to the Right were accentuated when it found, in the subsidiary elections of September, fifteen Monarchists returned among seventeen deputies. It gave the advanced Republicans a somewhat freer hand and a movement was organised with Ledru-Rollin at its centre, and in favour of a Republic, which, without adhering to Socialism, was inspired by social necessities to which it sought to apply appropriate measure. Cavaignac balanced this renewed activity on the part of the Left by the admission to the ministry of three men of the *party of order;* that is to say, non-republican Conservatives. Class struggles and class animosities for the moment dominated all political life.

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[8] The government had called on the National Guards of the departments to co-operate for the re-establishment of order in Paris. These went back home full of resentment against the insurgents.

The Constitution: its spirit

The *Constitution of the 12th of November, 1848*, embodied the Conservative Republic demanded by the majority. At the same time, it recognised by its preamble (Art. 2) that the Republic was "*democratic*"; its principles were "*Liberty, Equality and Fraternity,*" and its bases "*the Family, Work, Property, Public Order.*" The *legislative power* was entrusted to a single Chamber elected for three years by universal suffrage and assisted by a Council of State which drafted all legislation. The *executive power* was in the hands of a President elected for four years by universal suffrage, and eligible for re-election only after an interval of four years. This condition had not been adopted without discussion. It had appeared to the wiser Republicans that it was dangerous to give any President the enormous power which he would obtain if he were directly elected by the people. He would figure as their delegate far more than any deputy. Several, watching the reconstitution of the Bonapartist party on the strength of the Napoleonic legend, feared a stroke of ambition on the part of his nephew. That personage had returned to France. After the Revolution of February he had been expelled by the government, but having been elected as deputy to the Constituent Assembly by four departments and, after resigning, been re-elected by five, he had been able finally to return. He seemed to be strongly for the Left, spoke little and ill and had such feeble personal prestige that only a few deputies took him at all seriously. Yet one, *Jules Grévy*, in touch with the Bonapartist agitation in working-class circles and in the countryside, with its propaganda by leaflets and popular songs, sounded a clear warning as to its danger. He proposed that the head of the government should be merely a President of the Council of Ministers, elected by the Assembly and always subject to dis-

The question of the President of the Republic

Louis-Napoleon

Grévy and Lamartine

missal. Lamartine replied to him: "*Let God and the people decide, something must be left to Providence. Let us pray to Providence to enlighten the people and let us submit to its decree.*"

The election of Louis-Napoleon

On the 10th of December, 1848, Louis-Napoleon was elected President by an enormous majority (nearly seventy-five per cent of the votes given) against Cavaignac, Ledru-Rollin, Raspail and Lamartine. His name allured the peasantry, and the unpopularity of Cavaignac with the working classes had done him good service. In the political world there was stupefaction. The new President took the oath of fidelity to the Constitution and affected a highly flattering deference towards Thiers; but he chose Reactionaries for his ministers and gave his government a militaristic air, highly distasteful to the Democratic Republicans.

The demeanour of the President

His character and ideas

He was to be seen travelling and attending reviews in a general's uniform, a proceeding at least strange, as he had never at any time been in the army. In reality, he was an ambitious and tenacious dissembler, obsessed since he was twenty (he was born in 1808) with a fixed idea of restoring the Empire. He imagined that the army was still for Napoleon and that the working classes, attracted by his own socialistic semblances, would readily rally to his side. For the rest, he had made for himself, out of the legend of his uncle, under the name of *Napoleonian ideas*, a sort of theory which represented the latter as the great realiser of the Revolution and he regarded the Caesarian Empire as the perfect embodiment of true democracy. The politicians of the time, who, judging by appearances, thought him insignificant and negligible, badly deceived themselves, the more so that he speedily became the point of attraction for hopes very different from one another, but all equally useful to him. First the Monarchists, making the same mistake as Louis XVIII in 1799, were hopeful of turning his ambition to their advantage and so favoured it. He then formed about

His entourage

himself a band of "*men on the make,*" creatures of prey, needy as he was at the time of his election, or simply anxious to advance themselves in the world, staking their future upon his success. They brought energy and unscrupulous audacity to his service and gave him a reserve of positive and active will, in which, for all his tenacity, he himself was somewhat deficient.

The end of the Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly, before it separated, had ample time to realise how right Guizot had been and its own unwisdom in relinquishing control over the election of the President. Faucher, Minister of the Interior, an Orléanist, proposed some measures of such reactionary import that it took offence and compelled him to resign, but it could not prevent the President from intervening in Italy *against* the Roman Republic and *for* the pope, when the contrary course had been determined on by itself. It separated (May 27, 1849), with the well-warranted feeling that it had failed to pass even one of the highly important measures drafted for it by its Committees and that it was leaving the Republic in a sorry position.

III

The Legislative Assembly

The elections

The parties had tested their relative strength in the elections of the 3d of May, 1849: only sixty per cent of the electors had gone to the polls and had returned only 300 of the 900 members of the Constituent Assembly. The Moderate Republicans, who made up the majority of the preceding Assembly, fell to the figure of 80: Lamartine, Marie, Marrast, Garnier-Pagès were not elected. The Republicans of the Left, the Democrats, obtained 180 seats; while the Reactionaries, nearly all Legitimists or Orléanists, held 450. This was a triumph for "*the party of order,*" which had made the elections a campaign against Socialism, and had excited, by the basest methods, the resentment and apprehensions of the bourgeoisie and peasantry, whose attachment to the Republic was too weak to resist a pertinacious exploitation of the Days of June.[9]

A. The agreement with the President

The beginnings of the Assembly

The Assembly, known as *Legislative*, met on the 28th of May, and elected Dupin, a notorious Orléanist, as President. It immediately joined forces with the President for the crushing of the Republicans, whose electoral successes in the towns continued to cause it anxiety. The *Mountain*—that is to say, the body of Democratic deputies—was indiscreet and gave its enemies the pretexts which they desired for action against it. On the 11th of June, Ledru-Rollin demanded the indictment of the ministers and the President for their declaration of war against the Roman Republic. The Assembly refused to follow him.

The demonstration of the 13th of June

On the 13th of June a peaceful demonstration was organised to induce the Assembly to respect for the Constitution; it was charged by cavalry and dispersed, and an attempt at resistance in the Faubourg Saint-Martin failed to spread further. As a counter-stroke there were attempts at disturbance in the provinces, notably at Lyons: the active Republicans had not yet realised that there had been a material change in France during the last month.

Measures of repression

The President issued a proclamation containing a phrase which proved happy: "*It is time that the good should be reassured and the wicked tremble.*" Ledru-Rollin had fled to England, but thirty-three deputies of the Left, his "accomplices," were arrested; the army was purged by the relegation to Algeria of all soldiers suspected of advanced ideas. By one law the government was empowered to prohibit all public meetings; by another to regulate the establishment of a "state of siege"; by yet another a stricter control was imposed on the press; leaving as sole survivor what Montalembert called "*aristocratic liberty.*" In the departments the prefects ruthlessly exploited the ruling dread of Socialism. The blind majority went headlong to servitude.

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[9] A pamphlet by Wallon, a member of the University, with the title of *Les partageux,* gives an idea of the anti-Socialist passion of the possessing classes.

The campaign of Rome at home

1. The Falloux law

Then begins "*the campaign of Rome at home*"—another phrase of Montalembert's; that is, the decisive campaign against the Democratic Republic. Its first act was the passing of a law which bears the name of the Minister of Public Education by whom it was drafted, *Falloux;* it abolished the monopoly of the University, granted the liberty of education to the Church and permitted the organisation of Congregational Education hostile to the Republic and to Democracy (May 25, 1850). So inordinate, however, was the appetite of the Catholics that by many the Falloux law was deemed insufficient: they dreamed of the re-establishment of educational monopoly in their favour. The Falloux law had been introduced by Montalembert as a measure of social preservation. "*The army of schoolmasters now spreading demoralisation and anarchy,*" he said, "*must be met by the army of clergy*" which represent "*even for those who are unbelievers the cause of moral, political and material order.*" None can be better fitted than the priesthood to solve the great problem, which is "*to instil respect for property into those who are not property owners,*" and to turn their eyes from terrestrial claims by the promise of compensation in the life eternal. No measure has had a more decisive influence upon the political evolution of contemporary France; its result has been to place in the hands of a reactionary Church the education of the sons of the aristocracy and of a large proportion of the bourgeoisie, finally alienated from Voltairianism by their anxiety to defend capitalism. At that period the least success of the Mountain appeared to them pregnant with uttermost social catastrophe; thus the election of Eugène Sue, the novelist, who passed for a Socialist (April 28, 1850), lowered the value of State bonds by seven francs and occasioned an extraordinary movement to withdraw deposits from the savings banks!

2. The electoral law

A law was passed on the 31st of May which practically excluded the working classes from the electorate, giving them a right to vote only if they had lived three years in the same canton and if they had incurred no sentence for rebellious outrages on authority and the like. Now most workmen of the time moved much from place to place and it was easy for the authorities to bring the others into the second category of those excluded, any pretext whatever being good enough for an indictment and a sentence. The President had been careful to hold aloof in the matter, and to throw on the Assembly the whole responsibility for a law certain to be unpopular.

3. The press law

He did the same in regard to a press law passed on the 8th of June, which definitely re-established the deposit of security for good behaviour and the stamp duty for all journals and reviews, with the object of killing all publications accessible to the people; an object completely attained. A few judiciously applied fines were enough to eat up the deposit and effect the disappearance of an undesirable periodical. Thiers, the complete bourgeois, headed the movement of reaction against the "*vile multitude*" whom Louis-Napoleon on the contrary endeavoured to win to his side by management and flattery.

B. *The conflict between the Assembly and the President*

The conflict between the President and the Assembly opened as soon as he had got rid of his Conservative ministers and replaced them by men of his own choice (October 31, 1849). From that time forward the more thoughtful Monarchists could say: "*The coup d'état is coming.*" Never, in fact, had any Assembly allowed itself to be surprised by an event more openly prepared for or more clearly announced.

The question of the revision of the Constitution

One article of the Constitution troubled Louis-Napoleon: that which prohibited the immediate re-election of the President at the expiration of the four years' term accorded him by the Constitution. He thought that his term would be over before he could really get the Republic into his pocket; he therefore started to demand *the revision of the Constitution* and to tour the departments, making speech after speech to conciliate opinion. In these he paraded a fine devotion to "*the sovereignty of the people*" and warmly protested against "*talk of a coup d'état.*" He promised marvels if only he were given the "*means to accomplish them.*" For the rest, his reception was not everywhere too favourable, and when he ordered his prefects to induce a vote of the Councils-General in favour of revision, only fifty-two departments gave him approximately what he wanted.

Royalist intrigues

The Assembly saw what he was about, but the majority, rather than oppose him directly, endeavoured to forestall him and to subvert the Republic for the benefit of the monarchy. The Royalists, unluckily for themselves, had failed to agree among themselves on the adoption either of a candidate or of a political programme. Dissension left them powerless, and their influence over the people was too small to be counted on for any real assistance. They placed their hopes in a few generals, such as Changarnier, who commanded the troops in Paris. This army of Paris was becoming the stake played for by the intriguers of all parties alike.

Intrigues of the President.

The last incidents

The President naturally did his best to win over and attach it to himself. He seized every opportunity of treating the soldiers to wine and meat, of inspecting them and reviewing them and he surreptitiously had them encouraged to shout when he went by, or when they defiled before him: "*Long live Napoleon!*" and even "*Long live the Emperor!*" Did not Article 50 of the Constitution declare that the President *should control the armed forces?* He missed no opportunity of quoting it. The Assembly might have been able to alter the article and reserve to itself the control of the troops. For having said so to it Changarnier was dismissed (January 7). The quaestors told it the same and presented it with a draft to a similar effect (November 11, 1851). But the Assembly, conscious of its unpopularity, rent by struggles between competing parties, each attributing to the others, not without reason, the worst intentions, living perpetually in reciprocal suspicion, was no longer capable of any but negative decisions. It rejected *the proposal of the quaestors* (November 17) in which the Republicans had seen nothing but a Royalist threat; they believed that the people, "*the invisible sentinel,*" would watch over them and do all that was needed to protect them!

C. The coup d'état of the 2d of December, 1851

But by now all was ready for the coup d'état. It was carried out on the 2d of December, the anniversary of the victory of Austerlitz, by men who, risking all to gain all, and aided by their very audacity, were to a no less degree favoured by the unpopularity of the Assembly. The President of the Republic, by proclamation, declared the Assembly dissolved: it "*has become a hothouse of conspiracy. . . . It aims at the power which I hold directly from the people. . . . I make the whole people the judge between it and me.*" Forty representatives and about sixty Republicans of note were arrested during the night. The troops who had long been worked upon and were, moreover, composed of professional soldiers, ignorant, indifferent to politics and appreciative of the smallest material benefits (pay and drink) which had been unsparingly provided, blindly obeyed. An attempt at legal resistance made by a part of the Assembly, who pronounced the President unseated, was a pitiable failure and ended in the arrest of its authors. All seemed over by the evening of the 2d of December. During the night a committee of resistance was formed, but failed to raise the people of the faubourgs who remembered and still hotly resented the Days of June. A few barricades were, however, erected on the afternoon of the 3d of December in the narrow streets of the Faubourgs Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin. The government purposely allowed the riot to grow in order to give itself an opportunity for a decisive repression. This took place on the 4th and was brutal in the extreme. Some attempts at resistance, organised in about twenty de-

Resistance

Repression

partments, were easily quelled. The Bonapartist newspapers depicted them as scenes of Jacquerie and brigandage revolting to all "honest men" and the government profited by them to extend to the provinces the *purge* which it had imposed on Paris. About 27,000 Republicans were arrested and brought before *departmental commissions,*[10] who, by a simple "*decision*"—the word *judgment* was avoided—restored nearly 6000 to liberty and sent the others before the civil or military courts or sentenced them to imprisonment, expulsion from France, transportation to Cayenne or Algeria, to internment or to periods of police supervision.

The plebiscite

A plebiscite sanctioned the President's action by more than 7,000,000 votes against 600,000 (December 20), and he was able to proclaim that he "*n'était sorti de la légalité que pour rentrer dans le droit*" had gone beyond what was lawful only in order to get back to the rightful law); that, namely, created by the will of the people. The people did not realise what had been done. Their panic fear of the *partageux* had bereft them of common sense. The Republicans alone, exasperated by the repression, which was directed to the suppression of their party rather than to the punishment of resistance to the coup d'état, vowed implacable hatred to Louis-Napoleon and the political régime which he established.

IV

The new government (1851-1852)

The Constitution of 1852

The Constitution of 1852, which the President was authorised by the plebiscite to draw up, was published on the 15th of January, 1852. It established a régime closely analogous to that of the Consulate of the year VIII and, like it, transitory: a President elected for ten years by universal suffrage and armed with extensive executive powers, to which are added the rights of initiative and of promulgation in the field of legislation. A Chamber elected for six years by uninominal universal suffrage, which has neither the right of initiative nor that of amendment; a Senate, the guardian of the Constitution, appointed for life by the President, which comprises members by right (cardinals, marshals, admirals); a Council of State by which laws are drawn up.

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[10] These existed in eighty-two departments. Each was composed of a high administrator (the prefect), of a high magistrate (the *procureur de la République,* Attorney General), and of a superior officer, (the general in command of the chief place of the department). Its authority was discretionary.

The spirit of the government

Here, indeed, was a system which contravened every liberty and left to the people the mere semblance of authority; in which all was so arranged as to ensure the personal supremacy of the President-Prince. At the same time the latter made a great display of democratic principles and while he abolished every means by which public opinion could express itself and tolerated no opposition whatever, he assiduously asserted an extreme respect for the sovereign will of the people.

The restoration of the Empire

Towards the end of the year the Empire was restored (December 1) on the proposal by the Senate (November 7), called "in consultation" by the President and after a plebiscite[11] (November 21), under forms analogous to those of the government of Napoleon I and in the same political spirit; but the benefit accrued to a mediocrity and a band of adventurers who made capital of the glamour of Napoleon I's career as enhanced by legend. Only the simple were surprised when he, Louis-Napoleon, brought his labours to this end. After the 2d of December, 1851, he had behaved in all respects like a king, and though he had waited for a year before assuming the title, which was always his dearest wish, this was only because his natural indecision held him back; he had feared to take the last step. His hangers-on, who had everything to gain by the advance of his fortunes, induced him to venture, by arranging, during a tour which he made through France, for demonstrations to reassure and decide him. His first act as emperor was to increase the salaries of ministers and dignitaries. This was a benefit which the men who had helped him could supremely appreciate.

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[11] This plebiscite returned officially 7,824,189 *affirmatives* against 253,145 *negatives.*

Conclusion

Once again the people had allowed the control of their destinies to escape from their grasp; but they kept at least the outward show of sovereignty. Never in fact had a government existed, which in principle and in words was more democratic than that of Napoleon III, while none had ever been more determined to disregard popular opinion. This Caesarine restoration was due to the ignorance of political life in which the masses still lived; to their failure to grasp the Republican idea, and to the blunders of the men of 1848, Socialists and Democrats alike, too prone to believe that all political questions could be decided at Paris and by the will, more or less enforced, of the Parisians; and, finally, to the unpopularity of the Monarchists. The glamour of Napoleon's name, the propaganda based on his legend, and borne even into the depths of the country by pedlars and itinerant singers, above all the audacity of a handful of neck-or-nothing adventurers, had completed the work.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. THE SECOND EMPIRE AND THE INSTALLATION OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC

I

The government of Napoleon III

A. *Its theory*

THE government which was established in France by the coup d'état of 1851 and the Constitution of 1852 and received only some slight modifications after the proclamation of the Empire, was based on *the theory of Caesarism*, previously applied by Napoleon I: the people is supreme but delegates its powers to the emperor who represents it, incarnates it, acts in its name and in its place and is responsible solely to it. Contact between the effective authority and its source is maintained by the use of the plebiscite, regulated naturally as the emperor sees fit: Napoleon III personally detested any parliamentary system. The good of the public follows on efficient administration; comes, that is to say, from above and is imposed on the masses by consent, or, if needful and *in their own interest*, by coercion in every form available to the government. In the present case this good is attained by the realisation of the *Napoleonian ideas*, the principle of all political and social progress, Napoleon having been the "*executor of the will and testament of the Revolution.*" To the authoritarian features borrowed from the imperial system of 1804, Napoleon III added others suggested by his own reflections, which inclined him to feel tender-hearted towards the poor and sincerely anxious for popularity. The result was a really amazing medley, whose inconsistencies, however, in no way distressed the not very clear mind of the new sovereign.

B. *Napoleon III: the man*

His entourage did him much wrong and prevented the public from appreciating the really high qualities with which he was endowed—affability, benevolence, generosity—which were a happy contrast to the harsh aridity of a Thiers, for instance. His mind was neither deep nor clear, a current defect indeed in politicians of the time, with whom, too, he shared a fund of trustful simplicity which sometimes brought a smile to the lips of foreign diplomatists of any experience. Men who came in contact with him could never really decide whether the silences with which he met all argument against his views, arose from a determination to think before speaking and real sagacity, or, on the other hand, from an obstinacy based on want of understanding. For the rest, he was far from ignorant and if he lacked instinct and taste for the arts, if he never posed as a Maecenas and showed no interest in letters, he was nevertheless able to find for himself some intellectual occupations. His *History of Caesar* is not of high critical value, but it testifies to an amount of hard work not to be despised.

The imperial court

He wished for a court which should vie with that of Napoleon I and when, in January, 1853, he married a young lady of Spain, Eugénie de Montijo, the life of the court became extremely brilliant and animated and remained so up till about 1860, when an official and formal atmosphere began decidedly to prevail. Good taste and austerity might perhaps find fault with many details and public opinion might often seriously criticise eccentricities in themselves innocent enough. The legend of the "*Saturnalia of the Second Empire*" with which the revolutionary Republicans made afterwards great play, undoubtedly originates in these somewhat vague impressions. There is no proof that the morals of the Tuileries, of Fontainebleau and later of Compiègne were sensibly more dissolute than those of any other analogous monarchic circle. The chief cause of scandal appears to have been the incongruity between the occasionally austere dignity imposed by a rather pretentious etiquette upon the royal couple and a familiarity of manners apparently sometimes degenerating into injudicious freedom. Spectators from outside uncharitably interpreted this contrast as a combination of outward hypocrisy with inward infamy. The old royal noblesse held aloof from the régime, and the court missed, in consequence, the chance of learning from its members the tact and distinction which it specially needed; in their own salons they did not spare caustic comment. Napoleon III had greatly desired to be visited and crowned by the pope, as his uncle had been by Pius VII, but he could not reconcile himself to the price demanded for this favour by Pius IX—the abolition of the Organic Articles. The birth of the Prince Imperial (March 16, 1856) brought him some consolation for this earlier disappointment: the pope consenting to be godfather to the child and to send a legate to the christening (June 14).

The political rôle of the emperor

It is the pretension of the emperor to rule actually and alone. In his view, his ministers, whom he hardly ever changes and always chooses from the small group of men devoted to his person and attached to his fortunes, are merely his advisers and his agents; in all cases he reserves the decision to himself and takes all the responsibility. As a matter of fact it was with him as with all other rulers who are swayed by similar pretensions: his personal power is most often a delusion, because his knowledge of the facts can never be complete. This, from time to time, he realised. He could never quite escape from the influence of the bureaucracy, whose "experts" were too much for him and whose inertia proved stronger than even his obstinacy.

C. *The periods of the Second Empire*

For the rest, while *the theory* of the Imperial Government was unvarying, *its practice* changed visibly with circumstances. It is customary to divide its history into two periods: 1. *The Authoritative Empire* from 1852 to 1860; 2. *The Liberal Empire*—or more accurately, the Empire evolving towards parliamentary Democracy—from 1860 to 1870.

II

The Authoritative Empire

Its spirit and tendencies

During the period of the Authoritative Empire, governmental practice is solely directed to the maintenance, as a sort of stage setting, of a semblance of political life: elections, a legislative body passing laws, a press and the like.

A. *The restrictions*

The elections

The elections are now conducted in the *commune* and on a uninominal scrutiny, as is most convenient for the majority of the electors. But the government openly puts forward official candidates, under the pretext of assisting citizens in their choice. Electoral meetings are prohibited as infringing the liberty of opinion of the electors. The mayor, appointed by the government, is in charge of the election and, as it lasts two days, to allow a time margin for people in the country, he takes the ballot-box home with him on the first evening of the poll and will, if he acts as his own interests dictate, correct the aberrations of universal suffrage. Moreover, no one can appear as a candidate (at least after February, 1858), till he has given a written promise of fidelity to the Emperor and the Constitution. The government reserves to itself the right of modifying electoral areas as it sees fit, of linking up, for instance, a doubtful town with trustworthy rural cantons, or even of dividing a town into several sections each individually amalgamated with the countryside.

Parliament

The Chamber holds annually a very short session (three months in spring) but it does not appoint its own President, does not regulate its own business, and has neither the right of initiative nor that of amendment. For the rest, it deals only with laws relating to business plans in the field of economics. The budget is submitted to it, but only as a whole and is voted upon, department by department, without discussion of its clauses. As the government reserves to itself the power of changing allocations in the details of this budget, the vote of the Chamber amounts simply to the granting of a lump sum to be applied as the government sees fit.

The press

The press, without which public opinion is at the mercy of uncontrollable impulses, was subjected to a system of supervision, an arbitrary constraint often worse than that of the First Empire. No journal can be founded without the authorisation of the government which also appoints its editor; a deposit of 50,000 francs has to be made as security for good behaviour. Delinquencies of the press are taken out of the hands of a jury, commonly too indulgent in such cases, and are referred to Correctional Courts whom zeal for the government makes extremely severe. Any journal could, at any time, be suppressed for reasons of general security, whose validity, as may be well understood, is appraised by the government. A paper could also be *warned* that an article had given dissatisfaction and on a second *warning* it was suspended. Under this regulation by warning all periodical publications were, in effect, handed over for arbitrary judgment by the prefects for whom any reason, however ridiculous, was enough when it was a question of making a riddance of any paper which they suspected of the least inclination to opposition. Theatrical pieces were subject to a no less rigorous censorship.

The public liberties

The National Guard had been dissolved in 1852 by a decree which declared that it would be re-established "*according to circumstances.*" "*Circumstances*" calling for its re-establishment failed to occur. The government distrusted any organised assemblage of citizens, particularly if armed. It need hardly be said there was no longer any question of free association and free meeting except so far as to prohibit both; a mere evening party could not be given without informing the Commissioner of Police and he had the right to be present at any. Even individuals were subject to attentive supervision: the secret police (*la rousse*, as they were called by the people) penetrated everywhere, employed spies or, if necessary, provocative agents, in all circles of society, till they became an obsession with the Liberals by whom their hand could be seen in everything everywhere. The reasons given for arrest or for warning were no less grotesque than in the case of the newspapers.

The University

There existed in the State a constituted body whose Liberal tendencies were well known and much feared by the rulers; namely, the University. Its members were compelled to take the oath of fidelity to the Empire; those who refused, as some did, were expelled. Educational programmes were purged of the subjects most likely to awake in children a feeling and a desire for liberty: philosophy and history.

B. *The supports of the régime*

The clergy

This system of government by police, one of extreme moral debasement in practice if not in theory, a humiliation and an object of detestation to every free spirit, was supported by a docile *army* and by the *clergy*, who, counting upon favours from the Empire, had ostentatiously rallied to its side, thus achieving, in the phrase of Montalembert, an "*ephemeral alliance between the sentry-box and the vestry.*" *L'Univers*, the principal clerical organ, overflowed with enthusiasm for Napoleon III, whom it described by the pen of Veuillot as a "*very gift of Providence.*" The Church might well believe herself back in the halcyon days of the Restoration. She was recovering in the State, in its hierarchy, in its festivals and ceremonies, the official position which she had always been bent upon holding; her revenue was augmented; her "good works" received large subventions; public functionaries attended by order at mass on Sundays, and wine-shops were closed during service time. Above all, her communities could begin to move forward again: between 1852 and 1860 authorisations were granted to 982 sisterhoods, while 643 only had obtained it between 1814 and 1830. Louis-Napoleon, in the course of his propagandist imperial tour in 1852, when opening the cathedral of Marseilles, had indeed proclaimed: "*My* *government, and I am proud to say so, is possibly the only government which has supported religion for its own sake . . . not as a political instrument, not to placate a party but simply and solely through conviction, for the good which the Church inspires, and for the truth which she teaches.*"

The bourgeoisie of business

Apart from these two fundamental forces, the Empire counted upon the *bourgeoisie of business*, the class which is always ready to see virtue in a government under which it makes money. Napoleon III was firmly convinced that there was nothing which France would not allow him to do if he once made her prosperous, and that men absorbed in economic activities would soon cease to have thoughts of political life. The propertied classes would devote themselves to industrial and financial enterprises; the manual labourers would find remunerative employment in great public works. He failed to take into account the fact that, as Napoleon I had found before him, prosperity in a country revives aspirations for liberty and independence of all kinds; as past experience might have warned him, men who are well-to-do cannot for long be led like sheep.

Big business

It was during the Authoritative Empire that railways, recovering from the disfavour into which they had fallen in 1851, became definitely paramount in the economic life of the country, that telegraphic lines were multiplied, that subsidised transatlantic navigation companies were inaugurated, that the great financial institutions were started (the *Crédit Foncier* and the *Crédit Mobilier* date from 1852) which gave a powerful forward impulse to many great industrial enterprises, that agricultural committees began to spread scientific methods of cultivation through the countryside, that the "Universal Exhibition" of 1855 gave to Paris the first commercial, industrial and artistic international fair in her experience—during which finally, a thorough reconstruction of the capital, carried out by Haussmann, the Prefect of the Seine, gave health and order to the city, enlarged and embellished it, and made popular upheavals difficult for the future by running a system of broad roads through the working-class quarters and the streets that might readily be barricaded.

The arrest of political life

The full economic fruits of this great effort did not appear at once and the long dreamed-of prosperity was delayed for some years, being held back by various public calamities between 1852 and 1856: bad harvests, disease in potatoes and in vineyards, inundations and even cholera in 1853, 1854 and 1855. Yet the main object aimed at by the government was attained: *political life, to all semblance, was arrested.*

C. *The opposition*

The Five

The opposition was unrepresented in the Legislative Body till, in the elections of 1857, three Republicans found entry (Emile Ollivier, Darimon and Hénon). Jules Favre and Ernest Picard were added by a supplementary election in 1858. This small group, known as "the Five," formed the sole theoretical opposition till 1863.

The Royalists

In the salons of the Faubourgs Saint-Germain and Saint-Honoré and in the Académie Française, a carping spirit persists and the Orléanist *Journal des Débats* becomes ingenious in criticising the government without giving it a handle for retaliation. Its innuendoes, its allusions, sometimes witty, sometimes less so, may nettle the emperor and his entourage but are not of much real weight. The Legitimists ventured now and then on some harmless demonstration; the *rally* of the clergy to the emperor's side had deprived them of their main strength.

The Republicans: secret societies and conspiracies

Only the Republicans have still some means to do harm to the government or are at least still determined on positive aggression. They form secret societies, attempt insurrection and do their best to put Napoleon III out of their way by assassination. It is far from easy to estimate the reality and the importance of these many movements, and attempts alternately exaggerated, or extenuated as the facts are by the police according to what was believed to be the interest of the moment. Most often they are merely isolated episodes, unimportant except as evidence of the obstinate determination of the Republicans to attack the régime. Their proscribed leaders egged them on from abroad. They showed their feelings on every occasion whatever: the lessons of a professor in the Sorbonne or the College of France, who had too openly taken the side of the government, the funeral of some notable Liberal: Marrast, Arago, Lamennais, Béranger, Cavaignac or another. They took good care to avoid giving the police any excuse for the brutal repression which it hoped and worked for till it was exasperated by failure.

The attempt of Orsini and its exploitation

On the 14th of January, 1858, an Italian, named Orsini, threw three bombs under the emperor's carriage on his arrival at the Opera. Eight persons were killed and one hundred and forty-two wounded, but Napoleon himself was not touched. The attempt, as was explained by its author, who was arrested, originated with Italian nationalism. The intention was to kill the emperor and by his murder to provoke a Republican revolution in France by which the cause of Italian emancipation might benefit. The partisans of the strong hand, inspired by the Duke of Morny,[1] half-brother of the emperor and President of the Legislative Body, called for severe measures "*to reduce to silence extreme and factious oppositions.*" In other words, the government used Orsini's misdeed as a pretext for a cast of the net of the police into the world of Republicanism.

The law of *General Security*

Accordingly, on the 19th of February, 1858, was passed the *Law of General Security*, really a law for dealing with *suspects*, whose application was entrusted to one of the most devoted participators in the coup d'état of the 2d of December, General Espinasse, appointed Minister of the Interior for that purpose and beforehand (February 7). He acted with such energy that Napoleon III, when the bulk of the work was done, was obliged to ask him for his resignation (June 14); he was beginning to jeopardise the régime. The law laid down penalties on suspicion against all persons contriving plots or making or having clandestinely in their possession explosive materials, and so far seemed appropriate enough; but it went on to empower the minister to intern in France, to deport to Algeria or to expel from the Empire any individual formerly sentenced "*on the occasion of the events of May and June, 1848, June, 1849, and December, 1851, whom grave facts might again indicate as dangerous to public security.*" As the exact weight to be attached to these facts depended upon the minister alone, the law was equivalent to handing over the Republicans to the arbitrary will of Espinasse, and looked, indeed, as though it had no other object.

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[1] Morny was the adulterine son of Hortense de Beauharnais, mother of Napoleon III and the Count of Flahaut. He was born in 1811. The preparation of the coup d'état of 1851 was largely his work and he had directed its execution in the capacity of Minister of the Interior.

Its application

The new minister circularised the prefects, ordering each to arrest such or such a number of persons in his department. Who they were mattered little; the object was to terrorise the opposition. Each prefect made up his own list of suspects according to his own taste and inclination.

Embroilment with the clergy

The Law of General Security marked, so to say, the culmination of the imperial tyranny. In 1859, the Italian War took place which, coming as it did close on the Crimean War, was disliked by the bourgeoisie of business, the conservatives and the peasants, and most important of all brought Napoleon III into conflict with the clerical party. The emperor viewed with no favourable eye the advance of Ultramontanism among the French clergy; the influence of the clerical coterie which had gathered round the empress was insufficient to blind him completely to the political disadvantages of an infeodation of the bishops to the pope. He became accordingly inclined to throw cold water on the ardour of the Church for further conquests. The clergy, on their part, found the imperial policy in Italy not sufficiently discouraging to the ambitions of King Victor Emmanuel II, which menaced the temporal authority of the Roman pontiff. Veuillot, whose advice was becoming less and less listened to at the Tuileries, then discovered that Napoleon III was in truth no more than "*a Louis-Philippe with improvements*" and proceeded to attack him with such vigour that in January, 1860, *L'Univers* was suppressed by an order of the police.

The position of the Empire in 1859; the hesitations of Napoleon III

The rupture between the government and the Church was not and could not be official and complete after 1859; but in 1860 a series of episcopal mandates, many taking a very high tone, gave it clearly to be understood that the Empire could no longer reckon upon the political support of the clergy, the majority of whom reverted to their old Legitimist sympathies. Napoleon then saw the necessity of looking elsewhere for the support denied him by the "*vestry*," but he found himself greatly embarrassed. If he were to relax the authoritative rigour of the régime in an attempt to conciliate the Liberals, who had warmly welcomed the Italian War because it fell in with their general ideas as to the emancipation of peoples, he would give the opposition leave to make growth in the open. If, on the contrary, he attempted to stiffen coercion and repression still further he would run risks of a revolution. Both procedures had advocates among his entourage: Morny was in favour of the first; Persigny of the second, and the contradictory advice which he received increased the hesitation which was natural to him. He ended by deciding upon a policy of measured and prudent liberal concession. His health was impaired; he could feel the approach of a premature and painful senility; the men of energy, who had helped him to make his political fortune and were strong for authoritative government, disappeared one after another. Little by little he drew away from the empress and the life of enjoyment and high spirits of his earlier years to revert to more or less secret amorous intrigues. Finally, he had no longer any zest in conflict and longed for tranquillity; he dreamed of appeasement and reconciliation. He masked his capitulation under a fiction of "*spontaneous innovations*" intended to "*crown*" the imperial edifice, and became accustomed to announce these as determinations of his own and usually unexpectedly.

III

Liberal evolution of the Empire

A. *The amnesty of 1859 and the first slackening of the régime*

On the 15th of August, 1859, an amnesty was proclaimed which extended to all political offenders. The majority of those who had been proscribed returned to France,[2] not, however, to support the Empire but to strengthen the opposition. On the 24th of November the Chambers were granted by decree the right to discuss and pass, in response to the speech from the throne, an Address setting forth their views upon the home and foreign policy of the government, and they were authorised to publish in the *Moniteur* an account *in extenso* of their debates. In the following year (December 31, 1861) the Legislative Body received the right to examine the budget for each ministry clause by clause instead of only as a whole. At the same time the restrictions upon the press were little by little relaxed; the moderate opposition could now find expression.

The effect upon opinion

Public opinion interpreted these diverse concessions as an orientation of the Empire in the direction of parliamentary government. Yet Napoleon III himself denied it, and officialdom continued to behave as though nothing had been changed. There was, nevertheless, a revival of political and parliamentary life. At the elections of 1863, thirty-five opposition deputies made their way into the Chamber: nine elected for the department of the Seine were among them. Persigny, held responsible for this untoward result, had to leave the ministry (September 7); but Morny continued to urge Napoleon to stabilise the Empire by agreeing to a constitutional government.

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[2] Several of the most illustrious, Victor Hugo, Charras, Quinet, refused the mercy which was offered them; Charras even wrote to Napoleon: *"On the day when Liberty, Right, Justice, those illustrious proscribed, return to France to inflict the most highly merited of chastisements upon you, I, too, will return. That day comes slowly, but it will come at last."*

Advances to the working classes. Results

The emperor, who had never forgotten the pseudo-socialist reveries of his youth, nor the fundamental *democratism* which he attributed to Napoleon in his Napoleonic theorizing, thought the working classes might help. He remembered, incidentally, how pleased he had been when they acclaimed him in 1859, when he crossed Paris on his way by the Gare de Lyon to Italy, at the start of the war. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, son of Jérôme Bonaparte, paraded highly advanced democratic opinions; the Palais-Royal, his residence, was the centre of an often lively opposition to the government, and it was through his entourage that the first encouragements were issued to the workers, in the form of anonymous pamphlets: he proposed to attach them to the régime by satisfying their immediate needs and their more fundamental claims. These were not bad tactics; for the workers, disappointed in their hopes of 1848 by the bourgeois reaction and the repression which followed the Days of June, shorn of their leaders, and, in addition, under strict police supervision, seemed now to take little interest in politics. This self-interested campaign, however, while it did indeed build up a small working-class group under Palais-Royal inspiration, did not do much else but increase the activity of the manual labourers in defence of their own interests. Many, even most, were still Republican at heart; their ultimate dream being to embody their social demands in a system of political reform amounting to a revolution. Thus was formed an opposition labour party, whom the law, which in 1864 had authorised *coalitions* of labourers—that is to say, the organisation of strikes—had provided with a weapon whose effectiveness was to be demonstrated by future experience.

The manifesto of the Sixty

A remarkable manifesto, signed with the names of sixty working men and published on the 17th of February, 1864, claimed direct representation in the Chamber for the working class, and set forth a programme of claims for the most part political (universal suffrage freed from all impediments, liberty of the press, liberty of meeting, complete separation of Church and State, municipal franchises, and so forth). The manifesto concluded: "*The political outcome of working-men candidatures would be to strengthen and complete the action of the Liberal opposition.*" That is to say, by adding demands of an economic nature to the political claims of the Liberal of the opposition. This was not what the government had looked for when it began to take an interest in the working men.

The parliamentary opposition

In the Chamber itself, a growing audacity and activity among the opposition marked a revival of political life. Speeches, intended to turn public opinion against the rulers; lively criticisms of foreign policy (particularly the Mexican campaign); of financial policy, whose expenditure, covered by borrowing, ended in the accumulation of a heavy deficit; of rule by the police, and in favour of *necessary liberties*, were the principal weapons which it employed.

The Catholic opposition

The Catholics attacked, in especial, the emperor's policy in Italy. The publication of the *Syllabus* (December 8, 1864), in which the Liberals, not without some show of reason, saw a declaration of war upon modern society by the pope, and the government the negation of its own principles, aggravated the conflict. The publication of the text was prohibited in France (January, 1865); the bishops protested; the Council of State censured them. The presence, too, of Duruy at the head of the Ministry of Public Education (since 1863) annoyed the clergy, who regarded the ministerial plans for reform as so many attacks on the rights of the Church: such proposals, for instance, as the reintroduction of history and general philosophy into educational courses and, still more, the institution of secondary schools for girls.[3] The chief fault found by the moderate opposition with the home policy of Napoleon III was its failure to insist that ministers should observe coherence in their respective decisions, and avoid the arbitrary strokes of authority which frustrated any inclination of the sovereign to Liberalism.

The *Third Party*

Little by little a party was formed which endeavoured to obtain for the Chamber the right of exercising some control over ministers and over general policy. It was known as *le tiers parti* (the Third Party). It did not go so far as to demand a complete parliamentary system, but it believed the survival of the Empire to be bound up with "*the development of political liberty,*" and accordingly demanded the establishment of ministerial responsibility, the application of the common law to the press, liberty of meeting and the like. At the same time a small revolutionary party of irreconcilables arose among the youth of the schools.

The struggle between Ollivier and Rouher

A struggle for influence took place about the person of Napoleon III between Émile Ollivier, one of the Five who had virtually become a convert to the Liberal Empire in 1864 through the intermediation of Morny, and Rouher. After the death of Morny (March 10, 1865), and the disgrace incurred by Prince Napoleon in consequence of a strong liberal and anti-clerical speech made by him at Ajaccio (May 15, 1865), this Rouher had mustered about him all the advocates of autocracy and was infecting the emperor with fear of the consequences of Liberalism. The empress, who, since the health of her husband had become so gravely impaired, had given much attention to politics, inclined in the same direction. The whole of the year 1866 was spent in skirmishes, in which sometimes

[3] Up till then the State had not concerned itself with the education of girls, which was left to convents and private schools. The Church had largely controlled it and through women she had reckoned on maintaining much influence which was now threatened by the project of Duruy. Much time was to be needed before the new education could be successful; and hostility to it by the Church was to be continued.

one, and sometimes another, of the advisers of Napoleon III seemed to have definitely overcome his hesitations. By a letter to Rouher, published in the *Moniteur* on the 20th of January, 1867, the emperor finally took his stand on the side of Liberal reform.

B. *The reforms of 1867*

This promise took some little time to carry into effect, as Rouher and the whole governmental personnel retained their places and continued their resistance. The Chamber, however, obtained the right to put questions to ministers on all proceedings; the Senate became an upper Chamber with control over the decisions of the lower. The press regulations and the provisions in regard to the right of meeting were somewhat improved from the Liberal point of view.

The activity of the opposition

La Lanterne

The Republican opposition profited by these concessions to redouble their attacks. On the 1st of May, 1868, a redoubtable pamphleteer named Henri Rochefort [4] founded *La Lanterne*, a satirical paper which set to work to pick holes in the whole system, from the emperor, the empress and their entourage downwards. Its high spirit, bitterness and boldness, which shrank from no violence, had a huge success and exercised an immense influence in a country now so unaccustomed to freedom of speech. On the publication of its third number the paper was prohibited, but continued to be clandestinely printed in Belgium, whither Rochefort had fled to avoid imprisonment, and thenceforward recognised no bounds to its freedom. Those deputies who were advocates of authority, alarmed by the progress of what they called licence and disorder, formed a group in their turn. They were called the *Arcadians* from their meeting in the Rue de l'Arcade. They looked forward to a fortunate war as the best means of restoring at one blow the prestige and the authority of the emperor.

It is certain that the régime, owing to the failure of its foreign policy, and to the growing boldness of the opposition, now retained barely as much of its earlier strength as permitted it, from time to time, to indulge in a fit of violence or of autocracy more or less disguised which merely inflamed the irreconcilables still further. Napoleon III, daily more depressed and hesitating where to turn, had ceased to control events, and mainly waited upon them for the guidance which his own will could no longer give.

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[4] In reality his name was Marquis of Rochefort-Luçay and he belonged to a noble family ruined by the Revolution.

Uncertainties of the situation

The elections of 1869, which gave the Republicans an opportunity openly to formulate their programme of reform,[5] were a success for the opposition. Thirty Republicans were elected (in the larger towns and in the East) ; the Third Party returned with a great accretion of strength and again raised its voice for reform. The emperor yielded, at first partially, later completely. He dismissed Rouher and accepted *the senatus-consultum of September, 1869*, which marks a fresh turn to the Left. The Chamber received the right to elect its own *Bureau* (chairman and officers), to make its own rules, to question ministers, to pass, for specified reasons, votes of confidence or of censure, to discuss the budget, clause by clause, to propose new legislation; the Senate became truly a deliberative chamber. The ministers formed a *Council* and, in theory at least, became responsible; in reality they continued in entire dependence upon the emperor; but it was said that the Senate had the power to impeach them.

The elections and the *senatus-consultum* of 1869

This was the real beginning of *the Liberal Empire* which defined itself as *order within liberty*. Ollivier, now the leader of the Third Party, hoped to stabilise the régime under the new forms; but the opposition called constantly either for fresh powers for the Chamber or remained irreconcilable in its hatred for the "*man of the 2d of December.*"

C. *The Liberal Empire*

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[5] The *programme of Belleville* put forward by Gambetta in the quarter of Belleville was to become famous. It contained claims whose realisation the *radical* party has pursued down to our own time.

The ministry of the 2d of January, 1870

The ministry of the 2d of January, 1870, formed by Ollivier, gave the Third Party the control of affairs; but it soon found itself faced with insurmountable difficulties. The sentimental outpourings of Ollivier were futile to diminish them. The Liberal opposition had no difficulty in demonstrating that the new régime, established by *senatus-consultum*, could be abolished by the same method, if the emperor should grow tired of the experiment. It insisted upon the necessity of giving the deputies power to revise and to modify the Constitution, upon the urgent need of abolishing official candidature; it accused the ministers of being merely "*sentinels mounting guard over personal power to create a belief in the existence of a parliamentary régime.*"

The Republican opposition treated Ollivier as a renegade. An accident gave them an opportunity of estimating their own numerical strength: in a quarrel of a private nature, Pierre Bonaparte, cousin of the emperor—he was a son of Lucien, second brother of Napoleon I—shot with a revolver a journalist named Victor Noir. The funeral of this unfortunate man gave occasion for a demonstration against the Empire designedly pacific but none the less formidable. The police put the number of the participants at 100,000 and were in dread of a stroke of force by the populace. On the opposite side the Arcadians reproached Ollivier with destroying the Empire by his capitulations to the Left.

The Constitution of 1870

He agreed, however, to a decisive step by accepting the principle of a revision of the Constitution (April 20): the Senate was to share the legislative authority with the Chamber; it was to lose the constituent power which it had wielded since 1852, and which had been expressed in the *senatus-consulta;* the people thenceforward would, *by plebiscite*, pronounce upon changes to be made in the constitutional instrument. Under the advice of Rouher, this principle was immediately applied and the people were consulted upon the following formula:

The plebiscite

"the French people approve the liberal reforms made in the Constitution since 1860 and ratify the senatus-consultum of the 20th of April, 1870." The Republicans voted in the *negative* that they might not appear as accepting the Empire, but the mass of the country folk voted in the *affirmative*, the government thus obtaining 7,000,000 votes to 1,500,000.

The Parliamentary Empire

The *Constitution of 1870* established the Parliamentary Empire, and after the plebiscite the Republicans were under the impression that they had suffered a heavy defeat. Gambetta admitted that "*the Empire was stronger than ever.*" This was an illusion, and it was shared by the party of authority, who interpreted the vote as a sign of the attachment of the people to the Empire. The Cabinet, reconstituted, incidentally, upon less Liberal lines after the plebiscite, and subjected to pressure from the Right, proceeded to repress Republican agitation, to bring actions against newspapers, to hale "conspirators" before the High Court. Vain agitations of a time when all parties alike were falling into confusion and impotence; the Republicans themselves split into two groups: the one *closed;* that is to say, accepting as members none but authentic Republicans; the other *open* to all who were in opposition, even Monarchists. A solution, however, was approaching. It was to come from abroad.

D. *The war and the fall of the Empire*

On the 15th of July the ministry, whose primary intention and whose *raison d'être* was the maintenance of peace as against the pugnacious Arcadians, allowed itself, with characteristic and culpable levity, to be drawn into a rupture with Prussia. The subsequent war was disastrous. On the 2d of September, Napoleon III, shut into the trap of Sedan with his best army, was compelled to capitulate. On the 9th of August, when, after the early defeats, a vote of the Chamber had already overthrown the Ollivier ministry, a ministry of the Right led by a general, Cousin-Montauban, Duke of Palikao, took its place, with the concurrence of the empress-regent. The

Left opposition attacked it forthwith; the capitulation of Sedan brought it down and with it the Empire. The whole is known as *the Revolution of the 4th of September.* A popular demonstration proceeded to the Palais-Bourbon with demands for the dethronement of Napoleon III and for a Republic, and became, in spite of the efforts of the Republican deputies, an insurrection of the kind which enforces its own conditions. There was no resistance: the empress fled, the Senate dispersed. On the news of Sedan various large towns, Lyons, Marseilles, Bordeaux, on their own account, and spontaneously, proclaimed the Republic. The Empire, created by military force, incapable of winning real support from the nation, fell with scarce a struggle to defend itself, when that force had deserted it.

This government, which had subverted every democratic principle and suppressed every liberty, *had yet never contested the legitimacy of democracy or of liberty*, but the contrary. Its failure seemed a proof that reaction, whether in the guise of Caesarism or of bourgeois monarchy, or of aristocratic monarchy, could never endure in France, that a political system, to have any chance of stability, must stand upon broader foundations than the interests of a caste, a class or a coterie. The unfortunate experiments imposed on the country during the past half century led her to Republicanism in idea. Its realisation in practice was, however, not to be achieved without difficulty.

IV

The establishment of the Republic (1870-1875)

A. The government of National Defence

No sooner had the Empire fallen than, the deputies of the Seine meeting in the Hôtel de Ville, a group of revolutionaries assembled in a neighbouring room of the same building and the Legislative Body resuming its sittings at the Palais-Bourbon, each respectively sought to possess itself of the government. The first named was to carry off the prize. *The Government of National Defence*, which it formed, was presided over by

General Trochu, Governor of Paris; it pronounced the Chamber dissolved. The revolutionaries were without confidence in this government of "bourgeois," who were so lately sworn servants of the Empire, and whom they suspected, with justice, of extreme hostility to themselves.

Attitude of the revolutionaries

They therefore demanded pledges: the constitution by election of a Parisian municipality (they called it a *Commune* in conformity with Revolutionary tradition); the reform of the police of Paris by suppression of the Prefecture of Police and the City Guard; the immediate abolition of all laws in restraint of public liberties; the arming of all Frenchmen and the levy in mass. The government which feared "*their excesses*," and wished to concentrate effort upon national defence, was far from disposed to lend an ear to their claims: it appointed, by its own authority, a Mayor of Paris, Étienne Arago, who himself appointed the mayors and the deputy-mayors for the twenty arrondissements of the capital. The working classes received an impression that the Republic had become the booty of the enemies of democracy, a disappointment which exasperated them. The government, to make ready for the defence of Paris, armed all men fit for service, with whom it organised the *National Guard.* The revolutionaries, thus both armed and ordered, attempted, under the inspiration of Blanqui, to put pressure for enforcement of their programme on the Provisional Government. The latter indeed was far from homogeneous, with Trochu, a Conservative and Catholic, Gambetta and Pelletan, Democrats, Radicals and hostile to clerical activities. When the investment of Paris began, a *delegation* of the government was established at Tours, later at Bordeaux; Gambetta was its soul, and it did not long remain on good terms with the bulk of the Council remaining in Paris.

The attitude assumed by the government

The Day of the 31st of October

The main centre of revolutionary agitation was the quarter of Belleville. Suspicion of Trochu, who persistently refused to risk the sortie in full force which the workmen demanded, in order that the investment might be broken, and an order issued for the arrests of Blanqui and Flourens, commander of the National Guards of Belleville, produced *the Day of the 31st of October*, when armed revolutionaries rushed the Hôtel de Ville demanding war to the death, the election of a Constituent Assembly and of a Commune of Paris. They were dispersed by some battalions of the National Guard from the bourgeois quarters and a corps of Breton soldiers devoted to Trochu.

Embarrassment of the government

But the government found itself much embarrassed. Its members failed to agree upon either of the two solutions proposed: a drastic repression of revolutionary agitation, or the granting of more or less extensive concessions to its demands. It ended by deciding to demand confirmation of its powers by a plebiscite of Paris. This it obtained by 557,000 votes against 62,000 (November 3). It then proceeded to the elections of mayors and deputy-mayors of the arrondissements, in which its adherents, to a large majority, were successful (November 5). In this way it recovered an authority which compelled the revolutionaries to keep quiet; their exasperation was vented principally upon Trochu and upon Ferry, who had played the principal parts in the recovery of the government, and had ended by committing Flourens and a group of agitators to prison; Blanqui had hidden himself. They continued to demand a sortie in mass. On the 22d of January, after the fight of Buzenval and the resignation of Trochu, they were emboldened to resort to a fresh armed demonstration before the Hôtel de Ville, having previously set Flourens free. The affair ended in an exchange of shots of which they had the worst.

The plebiscite of the 3d of November

The Day of the 22d of January

B. *The capitulation of Paris and the Assembly of Bordeaux*

Paris, however, at the end of its strength, capitulated and an armistice was concluded, which should have been utilised for the election of a National Assembly, qualified to make peace in the name of France; Bismarck was unwilling to sign anything final with the improvised government with which he was then dealing (January 28). Unfortunately, the peasants identified the Republic with war, because they had seen the efforts of the Republican Gambetta to prolong the defence and because they had heard talk of the demonstrations of the *Reds* of Paris in favour of war to the death. As they themselves wished for peace, they voted in mass against the Republican candidates (January 8, 1871). The Assembly, which has kept in history the name of *the Assembly of Bordeaux*, because it had made its quarters in that town, and has remained an object of execration to parties of the Left, was composed in great part of Legitimists and Orléanists. Paris and the invaded departments alone, those of the East, had, as a form of protest, elected Republicans. *These were about two hundred against four hundred Royalists and thirty Bonapartists.*

Composition of the Assembly

The Assembly, then, in contravention of the result of the Revolution of the 4th of September, refused to proclaim the Republic openly and declared that it reserved for the future decision of France "*the final form of the government.*" It decided, nevertheless, to appoint *a head of the executive power of the French Republic.* This chief was Thiers, an Orléanist converted to the idea of a conservative and bourgeois Republic. He was to choose his ministers and to govern with them. To sum up, the majority accepted a provisional government upon Republican lines, which would permit him to prepare for a monarchic Restoration which should be unburdened with the responsibility for an onerous peace (February 17). Thiers formed a ministry by patchwork: three moderate Republicans, enemies of Gambetta, three Orléanists, three Legitimists. This he declared was "*a ministry of national co-operation.*"

The question of the form of government

Thiers head of the executive power

He it was who made peace (March). The Assembly then decided to take up its quarters at Versailles. Thiers had promised to devote himself entirely to the reorganisation of the country and the preservation of a loyal neutrality "*towards all parties which divided France and the Assembly,*" not to prepare, "*in relation to constitutional questions, any solu-*

The *compact of Bordeaux*

tion which should be exclusive"; but to reassure the Republicans, after having given the Royalists every possible hope, he added: "*This organisation, if we succeed in it, will be in a Republican form and in favour of the Republic.*" This has become known as *the compact of Bordeaux:* the deliberate suspension by common consent of the constitutional question. Four years were to be needed for the foundation of the Republic as the only possible expedient remaining after much agitation, much intrigue and many singular combinations.

C. *The Commune*

The discontent of Paris: the Federation of the National Guard

The people of Paris had the impression that the deputies intended to make away with the Republic and "decapitalise" Paris. The privations and emotions of the siege had left them in a state of extreme nervousness; regular work was not resumed and it was only slowly that the provisioning of the great city became re-established. Towards the end of the siege the Government of National Defence, discredited and ill-obeyed, had not been able to prevent the battalions of the National Guard from attaining political existence of a sort, becoming something like clubs. These finally formed themselves into a *Federation:* two hundred and fifteen battalions out of two hundred and seventy joined this Federation [6] which was definitely constituted on the 13th of March. The new government had not dared to disarm them and they obtained possession of two hundred and twenty-seven guns, bought by public subscription during the siege, which they desired, they said, to keep out of the hands of the Germans. They were numerous, organised, well armed and in a state of exaltation, furthermore extremely dissatisfied with the capitulation, with the peace, with the Assembly. Any trifle might well be enough to precipitate a conflict.

The government proposed to take over the guns; thus marking its intention of putting an end to a situation which was disquieting to the bourgeoisie and impeded the resumption of business. On the 17th of March a manifest by Thiers announced an intention of restoring to force for the establishment of order. But on the 18th, the operation designed for the seizure of the guns at Belleville and at Montmartre miscarried, and resulted in a riot. The troops refused to fire upon the National Guard; their general, Lecomte, was seized by the rioters and with another unpopular general, Clément Thomas, recognised and arrested on the Place Pigalle, was shot without trial.

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[6] It was represented by a *General Assembly,* in which *delegates* representing the battalions sat, directed by a *Central Committee* formed of delegates from each arrondissement.

The beginnings of the *Commune*

The revolutionary movement was, in reality, quite weak and might easily have been suppressed; but the Minister of War did not feel sure of his troops; the National Guards from the bourgeois quarters had not responded to the appeal made to them by the government. Above all, Thiers saw a chance of crushing the revolutionary party by an extensive and wholesale operation carried out from outside Paris: he decided to abandon the town to the insurgents. The politicians were hostile to this measure; Jules Ferry described it as a "*desertion*" and an "*act of madness*"; it was nevertheless carried out and the *Central Committee* of the Federation was enabled to install itself in the Hôtel de Ville. It was master of Paris and had at its disposal the enormous quantity of arms and munitions accumulated in the city during the siege. The insurrection, known as *the Commune*, had begun. The name came from the fact that the idea, already advanced by the revolutionaries since the beginning of the war and which they did, in fact, realise was to obtain the election, by the people of Paris, of a *municipality*, a *Commune*, analogous to those of the Revolution.

The retreat of the government to Versailles

The insurrectionaries masters of Paris

After some days of negotiation, during which the mayors of the arrondissements in vain did their utmost to effect a settlement, the election of the municipality took place (March

The second siege of the city

26). It gave a strong majority to the revolutionaries (sixty-five to nineteen) and the rupture between the Commune and the government, now in refuge at Versailles, was thus irremediable. *The second siege of Paris now began.*

The organisation and the spirit of the Commune

In the insurgent town, authority was exercised by two elected bodies: *the General-Council of the Commune*, derived from the election of the 26th of March and from which the nineteen moderates had retired by resignation; and *the Central Committee of the Federation of the National Guard* which ostensibly served as a "*link between the Council and the National Guard.*" There was, however, no clear distinction of functions between them. Our Socialists of today are keen to claim *the Federals* of 1871 as their ancestors; as a matter of fact the insurrection was not really Socialist, and the members of the government of the Commune were far from combining on a common policy. Only about twenty out of seventy-eight were affiliated to the *Workers' International* (started by Karl Marx in 1864 and installed in France in the following year). They had some influence; they secured, for instance, the adoption of the red flag and of the idea of changing the undivided Republic into a Federation of Communes, but they did not direct the whole movement and it is certain that the government of Versailles greatly exaggerated their importance within it. They were the only Socialists. The others were Montagnards of 1849, Democrats in the tradition of 1793, or Revolutionaries in the spirit of Blanqui, without any very precise aim; all advocated, it may be said, *plans for social reform, but not Socialist doctrines.*

Attitude of the government towards the insurgents

To France and to foreigners the government of Versailles represented the leaders of the Commune—*les Communards*—as nothing, it said, but a band of adventurers without morality or worth. It announced its intention to treat them as insurgents, unworthy of pity, in that they had chosen to strike their foul blow at a moment when France was still crippled by her defeat, and to make a spectacle for the Prussians of their lack of all patriotism. The Federals on their side arrested a certain number of functionaries, the Archbishop of Paris, some priests, police officers and others whom they declared they would consider as *hostages.* It cannot be known whether they would have succeeded in organising a really serious government and in putting their house in order—they had no time to do so.

In the departments

Several attempts made by the revolutionaries at Toulouse, Marseilles, Saint-Étienne, Le Creusot, Narbonne, Limoges, Lyons, were either unsuccessful or transient, and their repression was easy.

The recapture of Paris

It was otherwise at Paris. Thiers concentrated 130,000 men before the city; the Federals had never more than 30,000 combatants at their disposal. The Versailles offensive began on the 2d of April; on the 3d the Federals risked a sortie which failed utterly, and thenceforward were kept on the defence. The attack was made on the southern and western fronts.[7] Its progress was slow and it was not until the 22d of May that the walls were forced by surprise in the sector of Point-du-Jour. A week of street fighting was still needed for the final defeat of the insurgents. The last shots were fired on the 28th behind the cemetery of Père-Lachaise. It is this week which has become known as the week of May or *la semaine sanglante* (the week of blood). By the 22d the Council of the Commune had dispersed and the Central Committee as well; it was therefore by individual initiative that a number of historical buildings were purposely set on fire (the Hôtel de Ville, the Cour des Comptes, the Tuileries) and many houses, and that hostages were massacred. A legend was spread that the *Communards* had systematically set out to destroy Paris, and the firemen of the departments, summoned to extinguish the conflagrations, took home with them impressions of horror which it took long to efface, and which were to be used by the reactionaries as a weapon against the Republic. For the rest, the repression was severe in the extreme.[8] It exasperated the workers against the bourgeois and against Thiers, whom they accused, not without reason, of having determined from the first to crush the advanced Republican party and the Socialists. Even today these memories, yearly revived by a demonstration at the *Mur des Fédérés* (the Wall of the Federals) in the cemetery of Père-Lachaise), on the 28th of May, remain vivid among our people. *The revolutionary party was practically wiped out.*

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[7] The environs of the east and north of Paris were still occupied by German troops who took a great interest in the unexpected spectacle afforded them.

D. *The struggle between parties from 1871 to 1875*

The situation after the Commune

It is certain that, if the reactionaries had been able to agree among themselves, they might, as a result of the Commune, have easily destroyed the Republic, but they were divided into three groups: Legitimist, Orléanist, Bonapartist, whose antagonisms were the salvation of the now frail régime, in which even its leaders had apparently small faith and which was regarded by them, in any case, merely as a government wholly in the hands of the *directing classes*, and organised in their interest. Thiers sententiously remarked: "*The Republic will be conservative or nothing.*" The Assembly had been elected without a time limit; it might thus prolong its existence until it found an opportunity of fulfilling the hopes of monarchic restoration to which its majority still clung.

The spirit of the majority of the Assembly

Yet, as a matter of fact, such an opportunity was not easy to find, so great were the differences of *positive* opinion in the Assembly. The majority agreed readily on *negative* measures, intended to obstruct Republicanism and Democracy, and upon a *clerical policy*, regarded by all reactionary parties alike, even the Left Centre itself (Thiers) as the guarantee of all order and social security. The press was again placed under government control and the Radical Left, whose leadership had been assumed by Gambetta, had no means of making themselves felt but through the eloquence of their leader.

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[8] The troops, many of whom had returned from Germany to take part in the fighting, and were greatly annoyed by having to do so, treated the insurgents as assassins and incendiaries; they shot them in large numbers. The dead were estimated at 17,000 and the sentences, pronounced by courts-martial during the four years which followed the insurrection, at 13,450 (death, hard labour, deportation, exile, prison).

1. Thiers and the Union of the Centres

Until May, 1873, Thiers governed with the help of a coalition between the Right and Left Centres exactly like a parliamentary sovereign. He was completely absorbed in the restoration of French credit and the establishment of a normal régime. Though he had been a *rallié* to the Republic and to universal suffrage, it was to the consolidation of his own government that his labours were mainly devoted; but his allies of the Right Centre were in no way willing that the question of principle concerning the final form of the government should be thus shelved by postponement, and they affected to believe that Thiers was in danger of being swamped by the Radicals.[9] Thiers, hurt by a vote of no confidence (May 24), gave way to a fit of temper and handed in his resignation. In this he was wrong, for he alone possessed the authority needed to cut short the intrigues of the Monarchist reactionaries.

Failure and resignation of Thiers

2. Mac-Mahon and the régime of *Moral Order*

The Orléanists succeeded in obtaining the election of Marshal Mac-Mahon in his place, a distinguished soldier, but ill-fitted for politics. They expected him to help them to restore the throne in favour of the Count of Paris, grandson of Louis-Philippe. He formed his ministry by a coalition of reactionaries, led by the Duke of Broglie, an Orléanist. The administrative personnel was changed for the benefit of the Monarchists. A law (1874) gave the government the appointment of all mayors; the sale of newspapers in the public streets was prohibited; official candidature was practically re-established; effigies of the Republic were removed from the town halls, and, in official documents, the word *Republic* was as far as possible avoided. Finally, and above all, the clergy were given a free hand to organise propaganda. Rarely has France seen the Church so politically active as it came to be in the years of 1873 and 1874. The Ultramontanes, galled by the pope's recent loss of temporal power (September, 1871) were profuse in demonstrations, conducted to the tune of the canticle, "*Save Rome and France, in the name of the Sacred Heart!*" It was decided to build a "*church according to the national vow*" at Montmartre. Military chaplaincies were created, and finally, in 1875, the clergy obtained a legal right to found Catholic universities. Having thus become free to conduct education in its higher as well as in its two earlier stages, nothing was left them to do but obtain recognition of their diplomas as equivalent in value to those of the State. Such was the régime which has been called that of *Moral Order.* It bequeathed ill memories to Republicans, but yet did them some service. It gathered and grouped them more closely together and compelled them to realise how imminent was the danger of a reaction which even the most moderate could not desire. The whole Left wing joined forces to rescue the Republic by obtaining a Constitution which should complete its consolidation.

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[9] A Radical, Barodet, had been elected in Paris, standing against the candidate of Thiers, on the 27th of April, 1873. This was made the pretext for an outburst in which there was probably little sincerity.

The union of the parties of the Right and the *fusion* for the restoration of Henry V

The Right retained its majority, except on the question of the final form to be given to the government. On this there was division between the partisans of the diverse monarchic systems. It thought, however, that its aim was attained when a *fusion* was arranged for; a reconciliation, that is, between the Legitimist candidate, the Count of Chambord, and the Orléanist, the Count of Paris (August, 1873). The former had no children. It was agreed that he should reign under the title of Henry V, with succession to the latter or his heirs. Plans for a restoration were worked out on lines analogous to those of 1814. Such an enterprise could certainly have founded nothing durable; but, in 1873, with the energetic assistance

The failure of the enterprise

of the clergy, might well have been carried into effect. It failed, even before it had been started, because the Count of Chambord, narrow-minded and a mystic, but irredeemably honest, believed himself in honour bound to bring back the white flag, "*received as a sacred trust from the aged king, my ancestor, on his death in exile.*" No argument whatever, not even the intervention of the pope, quite unable to understand how he could attach such importance to a "*napkin,*" could induce him to give way. Meanwhile the Orléanists stood by the tricolour, "*the flag of Jemappes*"; and they knew that all France stood by it no less. When the Count of Chambord, in a published letter, made known his refusal of any concession on this point (September 27), the plans for a restoration in his favour were abandoned, and each monarchic group reverted to its individual ambitions; that is, to its usual state of discord and impotence.

The *Septennat*

A period of animated and sterile parliamentary agitation was inaugurated by the passing of a law which placed the executive power for seven years in the hands of Marshal MacMahon—it is the *Septennat*—and prescribed the appointment of a commission "*for the examination of the Constitutional laws.*" The Orléanists hoped, through the Septennat, to give themselves time to act and—under cover of the Marshal—to give a turn to the organisation of the Constitution which should facilitate the restoration they desired (November 23, 1873). They thought it might be possible to avoid mention of *the President of the Republic,* substituting the "*person of the Marshal,*" and that the *Marshal* could efface himself in favour of the king at the opportune moment. The Septennat was thus no more than a piece of opportunism.

The Orléanist and the Bonapartist attempts

Against the Orléanists, the Legitimists and the Left voted together for the overthrow of the ministry which was working for the Count of Paris (May 16, 1874). Next, various Orléanists and Legitimists, disturbed by the rapid recovery of the Imperialist party, joined the Left again for the overthrow of the Cissey Bonapartist ministry (January 6, 1875), whom Mac-Mahon proved unable to replace. Each of the three Monarchist parties, having thus had its chance and missed it, was compelled to fall back on the principle of the Republic, so applied, if it were possible, as to reduce to a minimum the apprehensions of the *directing classes.*

3. Discussion of the Constitutional laws

Discussion of the Constitutional Laws had opened on the preceding June. It had dragged on interminably, owing to the reluctance of the Right to deal definitely with the basic question, that of the form to be given to the government. In the Assembly, after lengthy discussions coming to no positive conclusions, a deputy of the Right Centre, a University man and a Catholic named *Wallon*, proposed an *amendment*, on the election of the President, in the following words: "*The President of the Republic is elected . . . by the Senate and the Chamber. . . . He is appointed for seven years. He is re-eligible.*" The expression, *the President of the Republic*, thus introduced into the amendment in substitution for the words: "*Marshal Mac-Mahon,*" proposed by the Commission of the Assembly, cut to the heart of the question of principle. Wallon explained that it was wise to call things by their right names and to consolidate what was, pending the advent of something better. His wording obtained 353 votes to 352 (January 30, 1875). Thus the Republic was founded by a *majority of one;* and public opinion conferred upon Wallon the title of *Father of the Constitution.*

The Wallon amendment

Conclusion

Little enthusiasm thus attended the birth of the new government; but the reluctant abandonment of the Monarchic idea by the majority, which had for four years remained so firmly attached to it, proved how necessary the adoption of the Republican form had become. The Republic alone, indeed, had not been irretrievably compromised in the past by any such failures as those which had successively overthrown the Legitimate Monarchy, the Bourgeois Monarchy and the Empire. The question was not one of reversion to the uncertain and unstable régime of 1848, or of any harking back to the emergency régime of the first Republic; but merely one of assuring a regular, reasonable and Conservative government, based on universal suffrage, and so far on Democratic principles, but with the bourgeois in control of it. It is for this reason that Thiers declared that of all forms of government then advocated, a Republic, thus conceived, aroused the least difference of opinion among the men who then counted in France. Yet it had been accepted by the majority of the Assembly only as the last of all possible resorts.

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CHAPTER XXXIX

THE ORGANISATION AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC (1875-1914)

I

The organisation of the Republic

A. The spirit of the Assembly in 1875

THE adoption of the Wallon amendment had settled, in favour of the Republic, the question of principle debated for four years between the contending parties; it had confirmed, too, the victory of Democracy, since the new government must necessarily rest upon the reality of universal suffrage; and thus, in the last analysis, on the will of the people, thenceforward master of its own destinies. But this, as a matter of fact, was still little more than a theory; first because the masses of the people, in reality, both politically quite uneducated and highly suspicious of Republicanism, which the Royalists, still personally influential in the country districts, represented to them as leading to disorder and communism, were devoid of the insight necessary for a sound decision, and secondly, because a constitutional principle is valueless except in so far as it is embodied in institutions and because the majority of those men on whom fell the duty of deciding what these institutions should be, were neither truly Democratic nor unreservedly Republican. This majority had accepted the Republic only because they could not help themselves, and as a stopgap in an emergency, while public opinion was neither anxious nor able to insist on a genuine effort for its realisation. The Republicans themselves, those at least who had seats in the Assembly—who alone really counted—were for the most part Democrats only prospectively. They appreciated and were even inclined to exaggerate the political incapacity of the people. The Commune, which appeared in their eyes as an instance of "Democratism" carried to an extreme, had imbued them with suspicion of institutions which allowed too free play to direct action by the people. For the rest, they belonged in general to the bourgeoisie; the interest, political habitudes, social prejudices of their class, no less than considerations of civic prudence, impelled them to adopt a Conservative system of government.

The difficulties which the Republic is to encounter

For these reasons, the consolidation of the Republic is not to be carried out without contest and difficulty any more than its evolution towards Democracy. The reactionary parties will try over and over again and in many ways to hark back to the question of principle, to overthrow the whole system, while each for its own part will work for the supremacy of its own political doctrine. The Conservative Republicans will resist the pressure of the Left wing, and do their utmost to delay such democratic and social reforms as would mean, in actual public life, the translation of principle into practice. From these antagonisms will result parliamentary conflicts, which in detail appear highly complicated and confused, but whose general result can clearly be seen today; it marks an advance of the Democratic Republic, an evolution towards the Left which sometimes slows down, is sometimes interrupted or for a moment driven back, during short outbreaks of reaction, but whose victorious movement no opposing effort will be able finally to arrest.

B. *The Constitution of 1875.* Its definition

The Republic, actually decreed on the 30th of January, 1875, was organised under an assemblage of legislative dispositions, improperly called *the Constitution of 1875.* It introduced no new constitutional instrument, but three *Constitutional Laws* completed those of 1873 upon the *Septennat,* those of 1871 and 1873, upon the powers accorded to Thiers, "*head of the executive power.*" The first (February, 1875) established the Senate; the second (the same date) determined the organisation of public powers; the third (July) regulated their relations. The debates, carried on under a ministry definitely hostile to the Republicans (Buffet Ministry of the 10th of March) were not generally advantageous to the latter. They made some concessions with the object of avoiding the reconstitution against them of a reactionary coalition, such as would have again challenged the accepted principle, and, above all, of postponing the dissolution of the Assembly, whose spirit made them anxious. They finessed by lending themselves to the individual hankerings of the three Monarchist groups; they even went so far as to come to an understanding with the extreme Legitimist Right—the deputies who were nicknamed *les chevau-légers* (the light cavalry)—in order to thwart the Orléanists and Bonapartists. It may be added that all the essential provisions, at that time adopted, resulted from amendments; no party was in a position to secure the adoption of its whole programme unmodified. It is a remarkable fact that, contrary to all precedent, the Constitutional Laws were never co-ordinated, that they formed no coherent whole and were unsupported by any declaration of principles.

Agreements and compromises

With regard to the chief institutions, *the two Chambers* (Senate and Chamber of Deputies), *a ministry* forming a Cabinet, with members jointly responsible to the Chambers for the general policy of the government, and *universal suffrage* for the election of deputies, agreement was easy: the idea of parliamentary government had already been accepted by the majority. Upon all other matters there was a clash of contraries. The Republicans desired that the sovereignty of the people and its constituent power should be openly proclaimed; the majority refused, and limited the constituent power to the two Chambers meeting in *Congress*, upon whom alone sovereignty devolved. The people thus did no more, so to say, than *appoint the sovereign body*, and were powerless to exercise any direct influence over the making or the working of the laws.

The Senate

The recognised right of the people to appoint the sovereign body was furthermore subject to a serious restriction in that a voice in the election of the Senate was withheld from the universal suffrage. It was carried out by a hybrid between two different systems. Of three hundred senators, seventy-five were elected for life by the Assembly (they were called *immovable senators*) and two hundred and twenty-five by a special Electoral College composed, in each department, of deputies, of members of General Councils and Arrondissement Councils and delegates of the Municipal Councils of the Communes, in the proportion of one delegate to each commune, whatever its importance might be. The Radical Republicans had wanted no Senate at all, and the majority of the others had hoped for one elected by a more democratic procedure.

The President

The President of the Republic was elected for a far longer period and armed with powers far more extensive than the Republican Democrats desired. The principle of the *Septennat*, put forward in favour of Mac-Mahon and for reasons of emergency, was confirmed and the election of the President was entrusted to the Congress; that is to say, to an Assembly of the two Chambers acting as one. To this President were given the powers of a constitutional monarch: he appoints and dismisses ministers; he presides over their Council; he can dissolve the Chamber; he can prorogue both Chambers when a session has lasted five months and can remain seven months without convoking them. He can constitute an extra-parliamentary ministry; namely, one taken from outside Parliament, regardless of the parliamentary majority and can retain it till the end of the year of its constitution; he has power to conclude treaties and the right to grant pardons. This is an imposing assemblage of powers, but diverse provisional details, parliamentary tradition in general, reduce its practical importance. Thus, to dissolve the Chamber he has to obtain the assent of the Senate. If he wishes to prorogue the Chambers too soon and to carry the delay in their convocation to its legal limit he must incur the risk of their resentment. As a matter of fact, it is not possible for him to form a working ministry from outside the parliamentary majority nor does he ever make use of the right to dismiss ministers which is given him by the law of 1871. It is Parliament which, by a vote of no confidence, can overthrow a ministry or so reduce its majority that it has no longer sufficient authority to govern. Finally, while the President signs treaties, they become effective only after ratification by the Chambers. These concessions, counterbalanced by restrictions, enable us vividly to appreciate the diversity of the political views which came into conflict when the Constitutional Laws of 1875 were drawn up, and which stamped them with a character of makeshift and compromise. They contain nothing, up to the provisions made for revision of the Constitution—to be carried out by the Congress, convoked on approval by the two Chambers—which does not testify to the preoccupations of the moment, and they show, in particular, the anxiety of the Monarchist majority to avoid complications in the procedure, through which, at no distant date, the monarchy might be re-established.

Vitality of the Constitution: its revisions

At first sight, it may seem surprising that this curious Constitution should have lasted so long, while others, better thought out, more logical, based, to all appearance, on sounder principles, had a comparatively ephemeral existence. But experience proved that it worked well; down to our day, it has needed to be retouched only twice. Once in 1879, when the seat of government, established at Versailles in consequence of the Commune in 1875, was restored to Paris.[1] The other, in

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[1] Law of the 28th of February, 1875 (Art. 9): *"The seat of the executive power and of the two Chambers is at Versailles."*

1884, did away with the public prayers, prescribed by the law of the 18th of July, 1875 (Art. 1) for the first meeting in each session of the Chambers; determined that the republican form of government could not be the subject of any proposal for revision—thus placing *the Republican principle above the Constitution*—declared ineligible to the Presidency of the Republic "*members of families which had reigned in France*," and took the first steps towards the reform of the Senate, carried out by the law of the 10th of December in the same year, whose essential provisions were the abolition, by individual extinction, of immovable senators and the distribution of their seats among the departments.

The maintenance of authoritative administration

This Constitution, then, of 1875, founded in distrust of the people as it was, served the cause of Democracy by enabling the Republic to continue. For the rest, the real spirit of the Assembly is emphasised by its determination to maintain the whole administrative machinery of the authoritative régimes, an attitude—ultimately becoming inexplicably contradictory to the very spirit of the Democratic Republic—which was to retard, as it still retards, the rational development of democratic institutions in France.

The end of the Assembly

With the establishment of a system thus *provisionally final* —as it was viewed by the majority—the Assembly of Bordeaux had no longer any valid reason for prolonging its existence. It passed yet another press law in restraint of attacks on the "*rights and the authority*" of the Chambers and of the President, a reactionary measure, due to the Orléanist Ministry of Buffet, which, while in principle submitting all misdemeanours of the press to the verdict of a jury, actually brought the bulk of them—and these the most important—by classing them as exceptions to the rule, under the redoubtable jurisdiction of the correctional courts. After this, the state of siege, arbitrarily maintained by the government in thirty-nine departments, was abolished, and the Assembly dissolved on December 31,

1875. Its powers in theory continued till March 8, 1876, when the election of the new Chambers took place.

II

The consolidation of the Republic

The internal history of the Third Republic will not be treated in detail; its complication is extreme, and no description will be given of the interplay of parliamentary struggles whose interest only emerges upon close examination.[2] An attempt will merely be made to throw light upon a few decisive events.

The great conflicts since 1875

These may be classified under three heads: 1. The three monarchist parties were in no way resigned to regard the political régime settled in 1875 as final. They persuaded themselves that the acceptance of the Republic was merely a transitional expedient. In consequence they made several attempts, sometimes apart, sometimes in more or less open combination with another, to upset the Republican government. 2. Their supporter-in-chief was the Catholic Church, steadfastly attached to the past and hostile to any system founded on the principles of the Revolution. Thus began that conflict between Church and Republic which was to pass through so many phases and which even today is not over. 3. The extreme Left, quite unable to regard the Constitution of 1875 as a fulfilment of their own political aims, and still more of their social demands, persevered in activities to which the progress of Socialism and Syndicalism, little by little gave greater amplitude and depth and which found expression in a hostility sometimes acute to the "*bourgeois Republic.*" In other respects these three series of events did not always develop apart from one another. They occasionally react on and intermingle with one another. Here general considerations only can be dealt with.

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[2] On this point, the excellent account of Ch. Seignobos may be read with profit: *Histoire politique de l'Europe contemporaine,*[2] chs. viii and ix, p. 236 and *seq.*

A. *Attempts at reaction*

Between 1875 and 1914 the parties of reaction have made three great attacks upon the Republic: the first in 1877, *the Sixteenth of May;* the second, between 1887 and 1889, *Boulangism;* the last, between 1896 and 1906, *the Dreyfus affair.*

1. The *Sixteent of May*

Mac-Mahon an the Chamber o 1876; the conflict

Mac-Mahon, the President, had not been converted to Republicanism by the Wallon amendment. He retained his trust in and his sympathy with the Orléanists, and was careful to preserve the administrative staff which, recruited during the period of reaction, since 1872, had no deep attachment to Republican institutions. Now the Chamber elected in 1876 was to a great majority Republican (360 to 170) ; it accordingly claimed that Mac-Mahon must govern upon Republican lines, appoint a ministry from the majority, and *purge* the civil service. The President elected his ministers from among the more moderate Republicans who would allow only those civil servants to be dismissed who were hopelessly compromised by open hostility to the Republic, and he resisted the anti-clericalism of the Left who accused the clergy of having joined forces with the reactionaries—exactly what they had done. At that time, too, the French Ultramontanes were conducting an energetic campaign for intervention by the government in Italy to restore the temporal power of the pope; the bishops indeed were so bold as to present a petition to the Chambers to this effect.

The rupture

The majority, in the Chamber of Deputies, responded by a resolution reprobating the "*Ultramontane proceedings*" and requesting the government to put them down (May 4, 1876). Mac-Mahon, urged on by his "*Conseil des ministres occulte*" (Secret Council of Ministers), in the words of Jules Simon, President of the Council—that is to say, by his reactionary entourage—could not reconcile himself to this change in policy and determined not to follow the majority, and, on the first pretext which offered, compelled his Central Left Ministry to resign (May 16). He then entrusted power to a reactionary Cabinet presided over by the Duke of Broglie, an Orléanist (May 17).

The two opposing theses

His tactics were to rely on the Conservative Senate against the Radical Left whose ideas, his "*conscience*" and his "*patriotism*" considered, must be disastrous for the country. He deliberately and indiscriminately labelled the whole Left "*Radical.*" The Republican majority, on its side, declared it to be contrary to the spirit of the Constitution that the President should have any personal policy of his own, and it accused his ministry of being merely a monarchist coalition against the Republic. This estimate was not inaccurate, but the fact that the coalition comprised members of three different parties made it less likely to do actual harm.

The purge of the civil service and the dissolution

Mac-Mahon began by adjourning the Chambers for a month, and profited by the interval to *purge* the civil service in a sense opposite to that demanded by the Republicans: forty-five prefects were dismissed and thirty-two removed to other departments. One hundred and seven sub-prefects or general secretaries were dealt with in the same manner and their places were filled with officials, "*à poigne*" (men who would rule with the strong hand), whole-heartedly devoted to the government and chosen for the most part from the old civil service of Napoleon III (from the 20th to the 31st of May). On realising that the Chamber would not accept the interpretation of the Constitution by which he claimed to justify this political attitude, the President requested and obtained the consent of the Senate to a dissolution (June 25). The real issue before the electors was therefore the fate of the Parliamentary Republic or indeed of the Republic itself. The speeches of the antagonists on both sides, between the 16th and the 25th of June, clearly indicate their respective positions.

The government illegally lengthened by three weeks the delay in convoking the electors permitted by the Constitution, and gave itself five full months in which to organise victory. Its prefects, sub-prefects and officials of all ranks—the clergy as well, though the Minister of Public Worship had requested the bishops not to take sides openly—did their utmost to turn opinion to the side of the government. Their tactics were to reassure the bourgeois and the peasants by laying stress on the secular and pacific policy of the ministry and, on the other hand, to alarm them by persuading them that to vote against the policy of the marshal was to ensure the dreaded triumph of Gambetta and the *Reds*. At the same time, the whole administrative machine was set at work to impede the propaganda of the Republicans, to prevent them from holding public meetings and to restrict the sale of their newspapers. They did not, however, lose courage; a coalition of the Left was formed to unite all the adversaries of the government on a common programme. The funeral of Thiers, who died in the middle of the electoral campaign (September 3), was the occasion of an imposing Republican demonstration: the former minister of Louis-Philippe, the bourgeois who had been in 1848 and in 1871 so redoubtable an opponent to the extreme Left, had become, in the opinion of the Republicans of the parliamentary majority, the representative of constitutional loyalism and liberalism in face of a policy of coups d'état and coercion.

The electoral campaign

Death of Thiers

Mac-Mahon issued a manifesto (September 19) in which he demanded "*the election of a Chamber which, rising above all party contentions, should devote itself, above all things, to the business of the country.*" This had little real meaning, since the question at issue was essentially a clash of political principles and thus necessarily of parties. For the rest, the marshal made it known that he would not give way "*if the elections went against him*" and that he would remain at the post where the Constitution had placed him "*to defend, with the support of the Senate, conservative interests and energet-*

Attitude of the marshal

ically to protect the faithful officials who, in a time of difficulty, have refused to be intimidated by vain threats." In these words he was retorting upon Gambetta who had warned him that after the elections he would be compelled "*to surrender or resign.*"

The elections and the resistance of Mac-Mahon

The Radical leader, indeed, was not without illusions as to the Republican chances of success, for he counted on the election of 400 of their candidates. They won only 327 seats against 208 given to the Conservatives. This was, all the same, a substantial majority (October). Mac-Mahon, supported by the Duke of Broglie and encouraged by the newspapers of the Right, refused to submit to the evidence and attempted to hold his position. But he did not dare go the lengths of the stroke of force which the Bonapartists advised: the army could not be relied on, and, moreover, some of the Orléanists said openly that he could not possibly resist the will of the country substantiated by the elections of the Councils-General (November 4). He tried to bring the Senate unreservedly to his side; but the senators, realising that this would be risky, declined the part offered them. The Broglie ministry then resigned. The marshal, waiting, hoping for no one knows what, replaced it by "*a ministry of business*" chosen from outside Parliament and Conservative, composed of officials with Rochebouet, a general, as President. Unfortunately the Chamber declined all relations with it (November 24), refusing even to discuss the budget. Mac-Mahon, aware that the Senate would not vote for a second dissolution, retreated, partly from personal scruples and partly from fear of failure, before the prospect of a proclamation of a state of siege and a plunge into illegality; moreover, the confidence of those about him was waning.

The capitulation the Dufaure Ministry

He therefore resigned himself and entrusted the formation of a ministry to Dufaure, a member of the Left Centre (December 12); that is, he "surrendered." The civil servants of the 16th of May were turned out; the election of 70 deputies, by official or clerical pressure, was invalidated; the Republican majority rose to 370 after the supplementary elections. Finally, in January, 1879, after a renewal by a third of the Senate, the Republicans won a success sufficient to give them the majority in the upper Assembly as well.

The victory of the Republicans

Mac-Mahon, finding himself definitely defeated—he had prolonged his presidency only because the Universal Exhibition of 1878 had thrown politics for the moment into the background—took the first opportunity of resigning (January 30). *Jules Grévy,* a Republican of the Left, was elected in his place and thus the Republic emerged the stronger from the ordeal it had undergone, for *it had been authenticated and confirmed by the country.*

2. *Boulangism*

The policy of realisation of Republican ideas

Union among the Republicans naturally did not survive the victory which it had won them. The Left Centre was speedily overwhelmed and the Left came into power. A series of measures was passed which indicated the spirit of the majority and accentuated the movement to the Left. Thus the Chambers came back to Paris (June, 1879); the 14th of July, the anniversary of the capture of the Bastille, became a national festival; the liberty of the press was established (1881) and any misdemeanours incidental to its abuse were admitted to trial by jury; the right of meeting in a closed and covered place was recognised, with the sole limitation that notice must be given to the Commissioner of Police; complete liberty of association was rejected (1881), but trade-unions were made legal (1884); secondary education for girls, so greatly dreaded by the Church, was organised (1880); primary education was reconstructed from top to bottom on the triple basis that it should be *gratuite, obligatoire et laïque* (gratuitous, obligatory and secular) (from 1881 to 1886); unauthorized Congregations were dissolved and expelled (1880).

The twofold opposition to the government

But the government, in the hands of men like Freycinet and Ferry, met with twofold opposition: on one flank from the

Right—to which the Left Centre inclined—for whom the government was going too fast; on the other from the Radical Left which accused it of failing to follow its principles to their logical conclusion and of becoming rooted in *opportunism.* From 1881 after the elections, and the return of 467 Republicans to only 90 Conservatives in the Chamber, and 205 Republicans to 95 Conservatives in the Senate, to 1885, the victors, no longer kept together by fear of the Right, split into several parties, often strongly antagonistic. They extended from the Left Centre to the extreme Left of socialistic leanings[3] (the term *Radical-Socialists* began to be applied to the latter) which revived the old programme of Belleville. The Radical-Socialists, whose spokesman was Clémenceau and who went further than the Radicals of Gambetta, frightened the bourgeoisie, even when Liberal, by their demands for an income tax, for the limitation of hours of work, for legislation to relieve disabled workers and the aged, for the recognition of the rights of the workers in the field of labour regulation.

Democrats and Socialists

Thus was resumed the conflict, so often recurrent since 1789, between the Democratic Liberals, who wished to abide by the existing political framework, and the Republicans, who regarded comprehensive social reform as the necessary antecedent to true Democracy. To their left, and still outside Parliament, stood the agitators who demanded a fundamental transformation of society. And the first paved the way, as it seemed, for the second. The conflicts which took place in Parliament over the principal questions at issue disrupted the Republican party, and favoured the reconstruction of a Conservative party. The elections of 1885 returned 202 Conservatives to 382 Republicans. Above all there was a general impression that Parliament was at a standstill, merely marking time, or frittering it away in personal intrigues, and immobilising the country in practical impotence. Men whose popularity had seemed quite unassailable, such as Gambetta, had lost it in a few weeks.[4] It unfortunately came to light that certain expenditures, possibly somewhat imprudent (colonial expeditions, some heavy construction work in railways and school buildings) had thrown the budget out of balance. A period of distemperature and discontent seemed to be setting in. The reactionaries sought for a means of profiting by this for the discrediting of the parliamentary government and the Republic.

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[3] After the 16th of May the Blanquists and the remnants of the *International* of Karl Marx united and reconstituted a small Socialist opposition about Brousse and Guesde. The amnesty for the political prisoners of 1870 and 1871, issued in July, 1880, had brought back masses of insurgents of the Commune, all ready to work for Socialism. They were at first much divided among themselves, and time was needed before they acquired any real influence among the people, but their theoretical declarations and their claims had already some influence on the deputies referred to.

Discredit of parliamentary government

Their chance came through the somewhat unruly ambition of a general named *Boulanger*, who had been pushed up to the Ministry of War, as a typical Republican soldier, by the party of Clémenceau. An active propaganda, like that of the year 1848 for Louis-Bonaparte, in which noisy demonstrations reinforced the classic procedure (articles in the newspapers, popular songs, illustrations, unfounded stories) gave him an extraordinary popularity: he had come to pass for the one indispensable minister from the moment when Rouvier, President of the Council, on most justifiable suspicion, dismissed him (May 31, 1887) from politics and soon afterwards sent him to command an army corps at Clermont (June). The eyes of the Radicals were opened as to the real worth of their favourite, but the Reactionaries recognised that his ambition might be made useful. In the phrase of a Bonapartist, Paul de Cassagnac, *Boulangism* became "*the common sewer of the universal discontent.*" A coterie of careerists and of simple souls collected round the general, a man highly emotional, of

Boulanger

Boulangism

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[4] Gambetta formed in November, 1881, a ministry of which he had great expectations and which was nicknamed "*the great ministry.*" In three months it had fallen without having accomplished anything serious. Gambetta did not long survive this defeat. He died in December, 1882.

little intelligence and of no political capacity whatever; politicians of multifarious origins jostled in his train. *The League of Patriots* led by *Déroulède*, whose one watchword was *revenge* for 1870, ostentatiously gave their adherence to a party which declared itself simultaneously *Republican, National* and *Revisionist* and took for its motto three words: *Dissolution, Révision, Constituante.* Their ostensible aim was the destruction of an impotent and degraded régime.

The resignation of Grévy

At that moment a grave scandal came to light (October): Wilson, son-in-law of the President of the Republic, was accused of selling his influence, and particularly of having joined with an agency which conducted a surreptitious traffic in stars and ribbons. Grévy had to resign [5] and the *Revisionists* made as much profit as they could out of the disgraceful business.

The programme of the Boulangists

It is difficult to know precisely what government they desired to establish: Boulanger's own dream appears to have been a military régime, with a President of the Republic in direct control and responsible, and a docile Chamber to pass laws prepared by a Council of State, the whole being based on a plebiscite. This conception was thus imperialist; the Bonapartists continued to support it and the Count of Paris, the Orléanist pretender, had just declared, too, his own faith in a plebiscite.

The coalition against the Republic

A coalition was thus formed—under the formal title of *the Open Republic*—joined by the Monarchists and Bonapartists and, overtopping all the rest, Clericals, each hoping to exploit Boulanger and to eliminate him later on when he had overthrown the Republic. Money, plentifully employed, was provided by the Conservatives. The Republicans, faced by a danger which the general's popularity made urgent, closed up their ranks and made ready for resistance.

The realisation of the plebiscite plan of Boulanger

The plan of Boulanger, who had been placed on the retired list in March, 1888, thus becoming eligible, was to act as a candidate in every department where a seat might be vacant and so organise a sort of plebiscite upon his candidature, pending the general election. He was thus elected in Dordogne (April 8, 1888) and in the North (April 15), but he was not of a calibre to impose himself on Parliament; he did not succeed in getting himself taken seriously and resigned (July 12). He soon came back, elected by the North, the Somme, the Charente-Inférieure (August 19). Finally, on the 27th of January, 1889, he was also elected by Paris. On the news of this last success, the Republicans were thrown into such dismay, that if Boulanger had had the nerve to attempt a stroke of force, as his entourage advised, he might possibly have possessed himself of power. He proved wanting in decision. He did not dare and, on that evening, he lost his game.

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[5] He was replaced by Carnot, grandson of the celebrated Conventional, elected against Ferry (December 3).

Failure and end of Boulangism

The Chamber, to preclude him from using his method of a pseudo-plebiscite in the forthcoming general election, passed a measure re-establishing uninominal scrutiny [6] and prohibiting a candidate from standing in more than one constituency (February, 1889). The general did not last till the election. The appointment to the Ministry of the Interior (February 21) of *Constans*, who was reputed a strong man, gave him cause for reflection; there was a rumour that his arrest was imminent. The dissolution of the League of Patriots, a resolution of the Chamber encouraging the government to "*put down enterprises of the factious*" (March 2), the passing of a law regulating the procedure of the High Court, scared him completely. He crossed the frontier and took refuge in Brussels (April 1). Thence he issued an arrogant manifesto; but he failed to show any real courage and his partisans felt extremely discomfited. For the rest, he was tried by default by the Senate, sitting as a High Court, and sentenced to deportation and internment in a fortress (August 14), with Dillon and Henri Rochefort,

[6] The *scrutiny of the list,* which formed part of the programme of the Radical party, had been adopted in 1885.

the most deeply implicated of his partisans, who had also fled. He offered to appear before a Court of Common Law, but the government had as little desire for any such demonstration as, in reality, he had himself.

The Revisionist coalition speedily fell to pieces. Orléanists, Bonapartists, Catholic politicians, aided by the Boulangists and egged on from a distance by the "brave general," in vain did their utmost in the electoral campaign; it turned against them. The magnificent success of the Universal Exhibition, opened on the 5th of May, had made opinion optimistic and had strengthened the régime: 366 Republicans were elected to 172 Conservatives and only 38 Revisionists, the latter almost all deputies of the Seine, and the coalition for a plebiscite soon broke apart. It had no reason for existence now that the blow, to which its various members had trusted, had missed its aim.

The end of Boulanger

Boulanger made a miserable end. Disillusioned, his following shrunk to a little group of the faithful, without power and without means, abandoned and hated by those whom he had disappointed and who had compromised themselves in his cause, above all desperate from the death of a woman whom he loved, he killed himself on her grave in the cemetery of Ixelles, on the outskirts of Brussels (December, 1891). He left behind him the reputation of a man too ingenuous for politics, led on, step by step, by events which he misunderstood, and by interested sympathies which he failed to control, to pose as a restorer of Caesarism. Exploitation of patriotism and of political distemperature, militarism, alliance with the parties of reaction, advances to the Church, flattery of the people—nothing was lacking to his enterprise but energy and decision on the part of the budding Caesar.

3. The *Dreyfus affair*

The fright, however, had been a bad one. For several years, the majority held to a policy of Republican concentration. The spread of Socialism gave them cause for anxiety, but

Movements of political life from 1890-1896

hopes, on the other hand, were entertained that the Catholics, discouraged by their perpetual political failures, would abandon the opposition, which till then had been the mainstay of the Right, and would rally to the Republic. There is much talk of *appeasement* and of *a new spirit* between 1890 and 1894. Nevertheless it is during this time that the *Panama scandal*[7] lowers the reputation of Parliament for personal integrity, by the imputation that the members can be bribed by men of business, to the serious prejudice of the public interest (November, 1892); the time sees, also, Socialism organised and entering into Parliament: Jaurès, elected in 1893, at once expounds from the tribune the programme of the great working-class claims; it sees the Parliamentary majority exasperated by the repercussions of the *propaganda of action* of the anarchists (a bomb thrown in the Chamber on the 9th of December, 1892, and the assassination of President Carnot at Lyons on the 24th of June, 1894); and the passing of special legislation against *libertaires* (libertarians) who declared themselves in revolt against society, impressed the Socialists with the idea that they might—on occasion—be treated similarly. The Republicans gradually split into two groups: one *Moderate*, not greatly anxious for the advance of Democratic institutions and inclining more and more to a Conservative policy; the other, *Radical*, egged on by the Socialists, which demanded the development, in logical accordance with Republican principles, of an active social policy with a definite Leftward trend.[8] They were competing for power with alternating fortunes when a trial attracted attention, in character non-political, and which should have been left to the law, which was to endanger the Parliamentary Republic to a greater extent than either *the 16th of May* or *Boulangism.*

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[7] The company which had been formed to excavate the Panama Canal was ill-managed and had become bankrupt. Some newspapers of the Right accused it of having purchased the complaisance of Parliament. The trial which followed these denunciations ended in an acquittal of all the accused but one who had confessed; but public opinion remained incredulous as to their innocence.

[8] The extreme programme of this policy was developed by the Socialist *Millerand* at a dinner given at Saint-Mandé (on the outskirts of Paris) on the 30th of May, 1896, to celebrate the Socialist success at the recent municipal elections.

The judiciary origins of the Dreyfus affair

An officer of the general staff named *Alfred Dreyfus* had been convicted in 1894 of having handed over to Germany certain documents relating to national defence and had been deported to Devil's Island on the coast of Guiana. He never ceased to protest his innocence and his family was endeavouring to prove it when, in 1897, some striking pieces of evidence in the form of documents and trustworthy testimony convinced various people (Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, followed by Scheurer-Kestner, a senator, and Émile Zola, a novelist) that the culprit was not Dreyfus but another. They demanded the revision of the trial, the more so since it appeared that a grave error of procedure had been committed: a document which the accused had not seen having been communicated to the judges of the court-martial. Nothing could apparently be simpler; all that was needed was to bring the matter before the court, whose decision could always be revised if fresh fact should prove it mistaken. But the officers of the staff believed their own honour and the interest of France to be involved in preventing revision; public opinion, at first, showed a blind hostility to the man whom it believed to have been duly sentenced by his peers for the crime of treason. For a dozen years, Édouard Drumont, a journalist, had been promoting an anti-Semitic movement in France. Its violence was extreme and financial scandals had favoured its extension: high finance, unscrupulous and corrupting, was represented as wholly Jewish; the Conservative newspapers had all, to some extent, followed Drumont's lead; and there were many readers of his *Libre Parole* among the clergy. Very many men, whom passion and

Its political distortion

an *a priori* hatred had stripped of all critical faculty, regarded it as quite natural that a Jewish officer should be a traitor, merely for pleasure and in satisfaction of his native propensities for evil. The whole country was soon split into two camps raging furiously against one another: *Revisionists* and *Anti-Revisionists*, *Dreyfusards* and *Anti-Dreyfusists*. With a few honourable exceptions, Conservatives and Catholics took the latter side. The Revisionists invoked *the rights of justice and truth*, their opponents *the honour of the army*. The partisans of Dreyfus denounced "*l'alliance du sabre et du goupillon*,"[9] the collusion between the clergy and the staff; the others were hot against the *syndicate of treason* which desired to save the guilty from just punishment and belittled the claims of the country. Most of the antagonists had become incapable of examining or reasoning upon facts; they blindly followed wherever their feelings might lead them.

The country split into two groups

The dispute imperceptibly became interwoven with the older fabric of political life, and ended in two coalitions, one of the Left and the other of the Right. Reactionaries and *Nationalists*, more or less in the line of defunct Boulangism, counted on a conflict between the army, whose feelings they inflamed to the utmost, and in which the Jesuits had many former pupils, and the Republic. The government could, undoubtedly, have made short work of the agitation by an order for revision, but for a long time it had neither courage nor possibly strength to stand up to the opposition and did its best, on the contrary, to give the Dreyfus affair a happy despatch by declining to give it attention. The successive ministers of war, too, on the strength of evidence supplied by the staff, all apparently believed in the guilt of the convict.

The two coalitions

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[9] The alliance between the sword and the *aspergillum*, the sprinkler for holy water.

Cavaignac and the "forgery" of Henry

One minister, Cavaignac,[10] in close touch with the Nationalists, even attempted to settle the question by producing at the tribune of the Chamber some documents which he believed absolutely trustworthy but which the Revisionists (many of whom, University men of distinction, were versed in textual criticism) declared to be forged. Colonel Picquart, who offered to prove that the principal document in question was a mere forgery, was imprisoned. But, shortly afterwards, an officer of the staff, Colonel Henry, one of Dreyfus' most violent accusers, hard pressed by Cavaignac, confessed himself the author of the document produced in the Chamber; one forgery was thus a certainty. The culprit was arrested on the spot and committed suicide in prison. The Nationalists looked on him as a martyr and opened a national subscription for his family. Recent revelations (1924) have proved that he was merely a traitor, that his forgery was solely intended to divert upon Dreyfus the suspicions which an adequate enquiry would have turned on himself, and that his suicide was an act of despair in the face of revelations which he believed inevitable.

The revision; reactions produced by it

At last the government could refuse revision no longer, so many were the newspapers now insisting upon it (September 27, 1898). The outcry from the opposition was so loud and the agitation in military circles so ominous that the Chamber found it expedient to pass a resolution affirming "*the supremacy of the civil power*" (October 25) and that the Left parties effected a fresh concentration. For the rest, the excitement of the two sides continually increased, reaching its highest pitch when the Court of Cassation issued an order for revision (June 3, 1899). The government was obliged to retire or place on the unattached list several generals who demonstrated against revision, and to arrest a couple of dozen agitators, among them Déroulède, President of the League of Patriots, who, on the preceding 23d of February, at the funeral of Félix Faure, President of the Republic, had attempted to induce a regiment to revolt.

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[10] This Cavaignac was the son of General Eugène Cavaignac, who put down the insurrection of June, 1848, and the nephew of Godefroy Cavaignac, leader of the Republican party in 1830.

The end of the affair

The re-trial of Dreyfus, conducted at Rennes, in a clash of frantic passions, under pressure from high officers, who had taken sides against him in the first trial, and did not like to admit that they had been deceived, ended in a second verdict of "guilty" (September 11). The government, convinced of his innocence, pardoned the unhappy man. In 1906, the Court of Cassation, on the case again coming before it, reversed the verdict of Rennes, found Dreyfus not guilty and rehabilitated him. He resumed his position in the army. Yet even this verdict of the highest judicial authority in the country was not enough for some obstinate unbelievers. On the other hand the chief agitators, Nationalist, Reactionary and Anti-Semitic, were brought before the High Court. Most were acquitted, but three received severe sentences, after which the demonstrations ceased (beginning of 1900). The Universal Exhibition of that year was a great success. As is usual in such a case, this did good to the Republic and gave it a new and a firmer standing. The Left formed a *Republican bloc* which for a time disheartened the reactionaries. Once more their schemes had miscarried.

4. Parties after the Great War

Thenceforward they had no opportunity of renewing them. Nothing is now left of them but a small clique of irreconcilable Monarchists, noisy and enterprising but without real influence. Their organ is *L'Action Française;* their leaders are MM. Daudet and Maurras. They have done nothing but provoke aimless demonstrations and their only recruits come from among the young people who call themselves the *Camelots du Roi.* The old Royalist parties, in fact, no longer count in politics, and the Bonapartists are in similar case. When the evolution of public opinion since 1870 is historically considered it is difficult to regard the re-establishment of monarchy in France as probable or even possible. In the Chambers elected on the 11th of May, 1924, and on the 22d of April, 1928, no open Constitutional opposition any longer exists; there are only "Republicans of the Right," Conservatives, resigned to the régime rather than attached to it, with, between them and the extreme communistic Left, every shade of Republican opinion. Thus the principle of Republican government seems accepted; the differences of opinion which remain relate only to its practical application.

B. *The resistance of the Catholic Church*

The most persistent difficulties which the Republic met on its road, those, which for the longest time hindered its advance to stability, came from the Catholic Church.

Catholic action after the Franco-Prussian War

After the Revolution of the 4th of September and the end of the war, that Church, favoured at first by the marked good will of the rationalists who composed the government of National Defence, and afterwards still more so, by the clerical leanings of the Assembly of Bordeaux, in which all parties alike were eager for Church support, had fallen a victim to one of those paroxysms of hope which have so often done her such ill service.

Her programme and her plan

The programme of the Clerical party of the time had three aims: to restore the temporal power of the pope, recently abolished by the King of Italy (September, 1870); to restore Legitimate monarchy in France; to bring society again under the laws of God. The Church applied itself with enthusiastic ardour to the realisation of this programme; its anachronism she could never understand. Her position in the State appeared so favourable at that time, that Jules Simon, one of those who in many circumstances showed her the greatest of good will, confessed that not Napoleon, not even Louis XVIII, or Charles X would have allowed her to reach it. She used to the utmost every advantage given her by the Concordat regardless of any of its restrictions. The Commune, which had no liking for her, had yet brought her profit, in that it revived among the social Conservatives those sentiments which had "*thrown them into the arms of the bishops,*" after the Days of June, 1848.

Danger of Ultramontanism

All Thiers' authority was needed to prevent the Chamber from voting "*against the sacrilegious usurpations of the King of Italy,*" in the words of M. de Belcastel, a motion which might have resulted in the gravest complications abroad (July 12, 1871).

The effort for Monarchy by divine right

At the same time the Church openly identified her own cause with that of the Count of Chambord, a pupil in perfection of the Jesuits. Mgr. Pie, Bishop of Poictiers, who had become theorist-in-chief to the Pretender (March, 1873) drew up a plan for his restoration, which involved a reversion, pure and simple, to monarchy by right divine. In a regenerated France, Catholicism was to be "*the religion of the country and of its institutions.*" By a stroke of the bishop's pen seventy-five years of political history were to be effaced and every interest concerned, including that of royalty, subordinated to the interest of the Church. A Clerical campaign of extraordinary violence was then being launched in which pilgrimages, retreats, the proselytising eloquence of ardent monks on home missions, even alleged miracles were employed to kindle the mystic enthusiasm of the simple and make the demands of the episcopate acceptable. The agitation was dangerous mainly because all France seemed to believe that it would be successful, an impression felt by Thiers, then still in power, as well as by Napoleon III, in his exile.

The Moral Order

When in 1873 Mac-Mahon replaced Thiers, and the reign of "Moral Order" began, the Clerical reactionaries displayed so great and so insolent a confidence in their coming victory as to be a warning to the Republicans for ever. On the 29th of

June, 1873, at a great pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial[11] at which the supremacy of the *religion of the Jesuits* over the older Catholicism of the country was obvious, Belcastel had *vowed France to the Sacred Heart*. And less than a month later (July 24) a law was passed providing for the erection on the slope of Montmartre of the *Church of the National Vow*, the basilica of the Sacré-Cœur, whose mighty bulk still dominates Paris.

The attitude of the Clericals in 1875

The failure of the Monarchist restoration postponed the expected triumph, but hardly had the Constitutional Laws been passed when the Church embarked on the overthrow of the government which they established. Her openly avowed design was to banish "*for ever what are foolishly called the principles of 89*" and to substitute for these "*fairly and squarely, the conservative principles of social hierarchy*"; to re-establish "*by law the three great bodies of the State, the solid basis of the ancient monarchy*"—that is to say, the three Orders of the Ancien Régime; to put "*atheism outside the law by ceasing to place all religions on the same footing of equality*"; to abolish civil marriage, to confer on the Church all the rights of an independent civic individual, to refund, under her control, the twenty Universities, to undo, "*in one word, along the whole line, the work of the Revolution.*"[12] It is literally amazing that men of some sense could have possibly believed that such a plan, at the time when it was put forward, could have been carried out, and, on the other side, it is easy to understand how the Republicans came to take for their slogan and axiom the phrase thundered by Gambetta from the tribune of the Chamber on the 4th of May, 1877: "*Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi!*" (Clericalism, that is the enemy).

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[11] Paray-le-Monial, a small town of the department of Saône-and-Loire, in the arrondissement of Charolles.

[12] These formulas are taken from an article in the *Semaine religieuse* of Arras, reproduced by *Le Temps* on the 14th of October, 1875, which caused some stir.

The Church and the government of the 17th of May, 1877

So eagerly had the clergy abetted the attempt of the 16th of May, 1877, that the same Gambetta could openly characterise the Ministry of the 17th as the "*Ministry of parsons*." Yet this mobilisation by the Church of her whole forces for the electoral campaign completely failed to prevent the victory of the Republic.

The revenge of the Republicans:

The educational laws

The Church paid the expenses of the campaign: she lost her hold over the primary schools, and, by the same blow, her chief instrument of influence over the people. Between June, 1879, and the statute of 1886, which *laïcisa* (secularized) the personnel of elementary education, the Republican majority made education *obligatory, gratuitous and secular*, compelled the congregational teachers to provide themselves with a State diploma, instead of confining themselves to the "letter" of obedience, handed to them without any examination by their superiors and forbade members of unauthorised Congregations to teach. The Church disputed the ground foot by foot, but in the end lost completely. In the course of the battle, her adversaries, exasperated by her obstinacy, attacked her at two vulnerable points by re-establishing divorce and by decreeing the expulsion—which indeed remained practically illusory—of unauthorised Congregations. In 1882, for the first time, the Chamber even considered a project for the suppression of Congregations and the denunciation of the Concordat.

The idea of Separation towards 1882

For *Separation* there was little desire, though it had been a fundamental article in the Radical programme since the time of the Empire. To the Right it was the worst of evils, to the Centre a dangerous adventure, to the Left an achievement for the future. Each party had its own illusions about the strength of Catholic feeling in the French people. The *secular* and *neutral* government school, which gave no place to religious education whatever in its schedule, was rearing generation after generation of electors far more attached to Republican liberty than to the Church, and definitely hostile to clericalism. It is for this reason that the Catholics called the scholastic laws "*les lois scélérates*" and vowed them inexpiable hatred.

The indiscretions of the Church

The imprudence and short-sightedness of the Church necessarily led the Republicans to look favourably upon a rupture which would have the advantage of putting an end to the paradoxical position in which the priests, though officials of the State, in virtue of the Concordat and State-paid, conducted an unremitting attack upon the basic principle of the State.

1. Anti-semiticism

The Church was, to a great majority, anti-Semitic after 1882 and the multifarious violences of her new friends often placed her in an awkward position. Her majority were also adherents

2. Boulangism

to Boulangism after 1897. When the downfall of the Revisionist party was complete, she was offered an opportunity of

3. The *Ralliement*

desisting from her policy of adventure. Pope Leo XIII had in his encyclical *Inter innumeras* (February 20, 1892), known as that of "*ralliement*" recommended Catholics to drop their opposition to the principle of the Republic and to endeavour rather to make a place for themselves within the frame of the government, and there to promote the interests of the Church, to obtain favourable legislative concessions and realise the "*Republic without the Republicans.*" At the same time, the *Opportunist* ministers, who were then in power, believed the hour had come for reconciliation and welcomed the rise of a

The "new spirit"

"new spirit" (declaration of Spuller of March, 1893). A little later an emphatic speech of Jaurès (November, 1893) called the attention of the bourgeois to the formidable persistence of Socialism, while Anarchy spoke for itself with equal emphasis by acts of its "propaganda by deeds." [13] Circumstances thus seemed more favourable to the Church. Unfortunately she had resented the proposed adherence, would accept it only in part, and that with such ill grace and ill will as quickly and greatly to discourage the pope and with him the well-intentioned Republicans who had somewhat imprudently put their trust in him.

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[13] It has already been said that on the 9th of December, 1893, An anarchist named Vaillant, had thrown a bomb in the Chamber.

4. The Dreyfus affair

Above all, the Church plunged into the Dreyfus affair, of course on the Reactionary side. She failed to understand, with a few honourable exceptions, what prestige would have accrued to her by an attitude of serene impartiality and a public affirmation of her desire for justice. Her anti-Semitic attitude was, at bottom, ancillary to her main purpose and for Dreyfus she cared nothing, but she rushed into the conflict between the army and the Republic, in the hope that force would be used and could be exploited to the detriment of the "*government by Freemasons.*" She had acquired a habit, which she has never since lost, of looking on Freemasonry as the one and only cause of all her disappointments and misfortunes. No sooner was the Affair settled than it became evident that Separation had grown in favour. The Nationalist coalition was falling to pieces. Its elements would necessarily revert to their origins in the old parties from which they were drawn, while the Church, the accomplice, actual or reputed, of the vanquished, continued to offer a wide, coherent and vulnerable front for attack.

The idea of Separation in 1904

On the 21st of October, 1904, one of the outstanding Moderate Republicans, *Paul Deschanel*, said: "*The Concordat of 1801 is merely a perpetuated stop-gap; it cannot be final for the democracy of the twentieth century. Religion organised in the service of the State is an idea of the past. In the future the State must be neutral in the field of religion.*" The Republican majority, however, hesitated before actual Separation. They were driven to it by the force of events at the end of a conflict which had been conducted by the State, in no way against the Church as the organised embodiment of the Catholic religion and worship, still less so against religion itself, but solely against *Clericalism;* that is to say, against the interference by the clergy in politics, and against *Ultramontanism;*

that is to say, interference of the pope in the public affairs of France.

Separation effected

1. The law of 1901 against Congregations

This conflict developed in two stages: In 1900 the Waldeck-Rousseau ministry had felt that there was cause for anxiety owing to the agitations and activities of "*les moines ligueurs et les moines d'affaires*" (the monks of the League and the monks of affairs) among whom feeling was inflamed by the prosecutions of the Assumptionists, which had revealed the existence of a vast political organisation. A measure debated during the first half of 1901 and accepted by the Senate, on the 22d of June, decreed the dissolution of non-authorised Congregations once more! Waldeck-Rousseau agreed with the principle of this measure but did not desire to be stringent in its application. When his health gave way and he retired (June 3, 1902), his place was taken by Combes, far less forbearing to the Clericals and obstinate in the extreme. He applied the Waldeck law far more rigorously than its author. In 1904 he secured a measure which prohibited the giving of education by Congregationalists and abolished within five years all Congregations which gave it.

Pius X pope

Leo XIII, having died, was succeeded on the 4th of August, 1903, by Pius X, far less adroit than his predecessor, less of a politician, and less well informed upon French affairs, a mystic and moreover as obstinate as Combes. The incidents which set pontiff and minister at variance were trivial; their ultimate importance was due solely to the spirit which each brought into their discussion; all reasonable men realised that the old Consular Concordat, a crooked piece of work in itself and applied never disinterestedly and quite often without good faith by the two contracting parties, could no longer be maintained. The interests of Church and State alike demanded its abrogation. It might, indeed, well have been replaced by a convention better adapted to the circumstances. Unfortunately, the conflict took the form of a quarrel which resulted in the

Separation, which Combes himself advocated only *in principle* and would have willingly left for the future.

2. The crisis of 1903-1904

Its incidents

The incidents in question were as follows: 1. A dispute arose, which was nothing new, on the formula to be used by the pope under the Concordat in authenticating the appointment of bishops by the State; the Curia naturally endeavoured to limit the action of the French Minister of Public Worship to a mere recommendation and to retain the actual power of appointment in its own hands. For better or worse, a compromise was concluded in December, 1903. 2. The President of the Republic, M. Loubet, was to visit the King of Italy in Rome. Combes embarked on negotiations with the Curia in order to arrange a programme including a visit to the Vatican in which every possible precaution suggested by the protocol was taken to observe due respect for pontifical sovereignty. Pius X obstinately insisted on considering the official presence of the President in Rome, as a guest of the King of Italy, a slight to his dignity, an insulting approval of the stroke of force of 1870, and he refused to receive M. Loubet. The visit nevertheless took place (April, 1904) and the pope protested. He did so in such terms that Combes recalled the French ambassador from the Vatican. 3. A subordinate remained at Rome in charge of affairs and all might yet have been arranged, if it had not happened that the pope, desiring to get rid of the Bishops of Laval and Dijon, enjoined them *directly*, and without consulting the government, to hand in their resignations. The Nuncio in Paris, a diplomatic agent who had never been given any direct authority on French territory, went so far as to allow himself to give an order to the Bishop of Dijon without reference to the Minister of Public Worship. Combes broke off diplomatic relations (July 31, 1904). The pope, misled by his agents, his friends and by the repeated declarations of the Republicans themselves, did not believe Separation possible and thought that he could soon make an end of Combes.

The Law of Separation (December, 1905)

Since June, 1903, a Parliamentary Commission had been investigating—slowly—the question of the relations of Church and State; it was in favour of Separation by a majority of *two votes* only. Combes, doubting whether his majority could be relied on, retired on the 19th of January, 1905, in favour of Rouvier, a man of much greater discretion. But Combes, now again a simple senator, came forward with a new fervour for Separation, and converted the high Assembly, who put pressure on the minister and compelled him to bring before the Chamber a definite scheme to that end (February 9, 1905). Briand, appointed to report, did so on the 4th of March. The debate, serious and weighty, resulted in the passing of a measure by the Chamber on the 3d of July, 1905, by a majority of 108 (341 to 233), next by the Senate on the 6th of December, by a majority of 79 (181 to 102) and by promulgation on the 9th of December. It approved the principle of Separation and determined on its immediate application.

Attitude of Pius X

The pope refused to accept this decision. He was indignant at the refusal of the French government to consider the Concordat as other than an enactment under the *law of Germinal* which had ratified it in France; he considered it as a bilateral contract, modifiable only by a process of negotiation. He persuaded himself that the Briand law was full of hidden snares for the Church and that the Catholic feeling of the French people would revolt against it. In this he deceived himself; the people remained unmoved in spite of the imprecations and incitements of all kinds, disseminated on all sides by the Clerical party, and the elections of May, 1906, which, turning upon this very question of Separation, destroyed the last illusions of those who had counted on civil war: the Separatist Left won 56 seats. "The government of parsons" still remained extremely unpopular in France even in departments reputed Catholic. It is indeed a misfortune that the determined

Sentiments of the French people

intransigeance of Rome should have prevented the bishops from finding a ground of agreement, and that consequently the Separation which, by liquidating a past of reciprocal aggression and rancour, might have proved a boon to the Church, useful to the State, favourable to the public peace, should have left the Church posing as victimised and outraged. When the old era of difficulties might have been ended, a new one was inaugurated.

Political result of the Separation

The position of the Church in the Republican State

The clergy have undoubtedly desisted from direct political action against the Republic, but as they have maintained in integrity their programme for reorganisation of the city and of society by which they propose to bring both again under Catholic control (*omnia instaurare in Christo*) according to the policy thought imperative by Pius X, they have been driven to assume a position of irreconcilable hostility to the basic principles of the *secular and Democratic State*, to the non-doctrinal school (*école neutre*), to the laws restricting free association by Congregations, to the prohibition of education directed against Congregationalists. They believed that the *Sacred Union*—that is to say, the truce tacitly accepted in 1914 by all parties to meet the national danger with a united front—during which the most restrictive of these laws were relaxed, could be prolonged after the war and could lead to an abandonment or at least to a revision in their favour of the whole *Legislation of Republican Defence*. Today, when their hopes have been disappointed, in part undoubtedly because they were in too great a hurry to realise them and, above all, because they have pitched them higher than political conditions allowed, they remain in the same state of mind and in the same attitude of which they have so often given examples since 1790: they rise in revolt against the principles of the Revolution, the basic foundations of the Republican State, which they declare incompatible with the principles of a Christian society. They declare that they join issue solely "*upon religious ground*"; but no attentive observer can doubt that behind their religious claims lies a conception of government altogether alien to that now prevalent in France. And for this reason the Catholic Church, whether she will or no, still figures in that country as the irreconcilable foe of the Democratic Republic. The organisation through which she acts on politics has been much improved since 1905, but the rapid weakening of faith among the masses greatly lessens the chance that her endeavours will lead to success. She will, in all probability, fall far short of the ends which she sets herself and make little impression on her adversary.

C. *The hostility of the parties of the extreme Left*

Until after the fall of Mac-Mahon, such extreme Democratic opinions and Radical social demands, as attacked the fundamental principles of society, had found few adherents except in small and uninfluential working-class groups. The repression which followed the Commune had robbed them of their leaders, but the extreme Radical Left demanded an amnesty for the convicts of 1871 and obtained it in 1880. This made possible the reconstitution of a Revolutionary party which detested the *Bourgeois Republic*, both for the unforgivable executions of 1871 and for its opposition to the main social reforms, in the want of which there could be no question of real equality, justice or indeed of a true Republic. This party, in the diverse forms which it successively assumed, was the cause of serious difficulties to the government, which, however, by the perpetual pressure thus put on it, was led to lean to the Left and ultimately to carry out important social reforms.

Reconstitution of a Revolutionary party

The *socialistic* achievements of this party

This Revolutionary party, just at first, hovered only on the outskirts of parliamentary life. Internal dissensions sterilised its activities. The *Blanquists* of the *Central Revolutionary Committee* opposed the *Guédists* of the *French Labour Party*, to mention only the two main groups, but after 1893 Socialists in some numbers took seats on the extreme Left of the Chamber and grew gradually more numerous. They had so far little weight as a parliamentary party, but they had among them a great orator, Jean Jaurès, and they seized every opportunity of compelling the majority to listen to their grievances against capitalist society and the government which served it. In the same year (1893) was formed the *League of Revolutionary Action for the attainment of the Social Republic.* In this the various Socialist groups united; its first principle being that its members should decline to collaborate with any bourgeois ministry whatever. In 1905, after the reconstitution of the *Workers' International*, the *Parti socialiste unifié* (Amalgamated Socialist party) was founded whose members undertook to refuse military credits, secret funds for influencing the press and even the budget altogether. Thus in Parliament itself grew up an opposition of the Left to which time was to bring strength.

The achievements of Trade-Unionism

Another was formed outside Parliament with similar aims which immediately became far more formidable. Under a measure of the 21st of March, 1884, the constitution of *Syndicats* (trade-unions) in defence of the economic interests of various trade bodies was allowed. These multiplied and, in 1895, formed the *Confédération générale du travail* (General Confederation of Labour), which was joined by most working-class groups. These unions commonly professed a contempt for politics and ostensibly restricted themselves to the promotion of social changes in the interests of the manual labourer; but in many cases they fell under the control of social revolutionaries.

The General Confederation of Labour and Anarchism

In no long time, in the General Confederation of Labour, the extremists, known as *Anarchists*, obtained precedence over the *Reformists* who preferred to work by gradual transition and to avoid violence. Thus the *Syndicalisme révolutionnaire* (Revolutionary Trade-Unionism) became established, preaching preparation for the *General Strike* and for the *Great Day* when the State and capitalist society should succumb to the might of the proletariat; organising an anti-militaristic and anti-patriotic propaganda; recommending *sabotage*, that is to say, the destruction of the material instruments of capitalism, the disorganisation of work by all means possible, and physical violence against persons from whom resistance or opposition might be apprehended.

About 1894, various anarchist outrages (bombs thrown in public places; the assassination of President Carnot on the 24th of June) were met by special legislation which put a check to this propaganda by deeds. Revolutionary Trade-Unionism, however, worked on as before.

The period of disturbances

The years 1906, 1907, 1908 in particular, under the Clémenceau ministry, were marked by an uninterrupted series of conflicts between the government and Socialist Trade-Unionism. The slightest dispute between workman and employer, the most insignificant strike, would take on, by the intervention of Syndicalist and Anarchist agitators, an appearance of social revolution; the more so because the bourgeois majority was still reluctant to make equitable and necessary concessions. To labour its attitude was always wrong, but rarely if ever would it admit labour to be in the right. Above all it would never allow that State functionaries might justifiably form unions and use the strike in enforcement of their demands. A post-office workers' strike in 1909 and one of railwaymen in 1910 appeared to it dangerous symptoms of grave social disintegration, and it called on the government to impose severe penalties on the strikers; above all, dismissal.

The war and its consequences

In the *Sacred Union* of 1914, when all parties combined before the danger of the nation, the Revolutionaries took part with their fellow Frenchmen. They made no attempt to use the occasion for any realisation of their vast design; the government which had made ready beforehand to arrest their leaders found no need for any such step; there was no military strike. Even the Amalgamated Socialists fell into line and took part in the government and Anarchists did their duty nobly

Bolshevist communism

as soldiers. But outside France an opportunity occurred for the famous "Great Day" and was duly taken; namely, through the Russian Revolution, at first anti-tsarist and political, and later anti-bourgeois and social—a great encouragement for the extreme Revolutionary Left, which promptly entered into relations with the Bolshevist government of Moscow and participated in its programme of universal subversion. Anarchists indeed failed to recognise themselves in the achievement of Lenin and Trotsky, resulting in the establishment of a despotism of the terrorist type rather than in the destruction of all public power; and the majority of Socialists declined to have anything to do with a system which extinguished all liberty and bore with extreme harshness on the Socialists of Russia itself. But a *Communist* group was formed, taking the word from the *Third International* and organising its activities in France under the inspiration and on the propagandist methods employed by the Republic of the Soviets.

The *"Communist peril"*

This party, whose chances are inevitably not good in a country of small landowners like France, has attracted some recruits from the working classes, assisted by the discontent, the difficulties of various kinds, and the poverty resultant on the war; it has hunted hard for a formula which may attract and reassure the peasants. And, while it has so far not found one, it has none the less diligently exploited the disappointments and resentments which are so plentiful among us. At the elections of 1924, it won 26 deputy seats, forming an obstreperous and assiduous group on the extreme Left. The Communists proved much encouraged by this unexpected success. The transference of the ashes of Jaurès to the Panthéon (November 23, 1924) gave them an opportunity for an imposing demonstration, and they have become a cause for anxiety not only to Conservatives of all kinds (who seek to exploit the universal bourgeois dread of the Great Day) but even to a Radical-Socialist government.

Conclusion

At the hour when these lines are written, the past of the Republic seems to certify its future: no attempt at reaction has ever prevailed, whatever form it has taken, over the will of the people as affirmed, every four years, and at the end of every four years more clearly than before. The Reactionaries tend to cherish the illusion that the elections take place under the pressure of a minority (they say 25,000 or 30,000) of Freemasons, disciplined, resolute and backed by a handful of Protestants and Jews, an allegation not worth refuting. The truth is that since 1875 the evolution of the country has turned definitely to the Left. By now, the only two forces from the past which still count as opponents to this movement towards a more complete realisation of Republican Democracy are the Catholic Church, which seeks to regain her control over men's souls, and the propertied bourgeoisie who fear for their capital. Even thus allied and stimulated as they are by the knowledge that they are fighting for their very existence, they are in no position to change or even for long to check the natural course of events. They will undoubtedly do the Republic the service of moderating the precipitance of its advance to full realisation of the great Democratic ideals.

At the other extreme the Communists will perhaps think themselves strong enough to put their fortunes to the test; they have no chance of success; the most they can do will be to play, for a short time, the game of the Conservative Right and the Church. The real service which they render to the body politic will be to prevent it from being laggard in its advance, and, without reservation, to bring before it the continually fresh problems of which life is always prolific.

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CHAPTER XL

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF FRANCE SINCE 1815

The situation created by the treaties of 1815

THE liquidation of the Napoleonic Empire was the work of the *treaties of Vienna.* This settlement of accounts, conceived in a spirit of mistrust and hostility towards France, left her in an awkward position in Europe. An army of 150,000 Allies occupied her departments of the East and North for five years, under the second treaty of Paris (November 20), possibly rather to keep her under supervision pending the consolidation of the restored monarchy, than to secure the due payment of the war indemnity with which she was charged. For a long time the country was to feel the humiliation of this degradation and a hatred for the "treaties of 1815" which imposed it. In reality the victors feared, above all things, a rekindling of the fires of the Revolution, and the precautions which they took against France were due more to their fears on this point than to any feelings of mistrust or profound hostility towards the French people. Nevertheless the principles of the Revolution are to gain ground in despite of all obstacles, and, in the course of the nineteenth century, little by little to impose themselves on every European government in turn, to the ruin of the edifice so laboriously erected by the Allies of 1815; direct action by France contributes to this result only as an accessory.

I

The policy of the Restoration

The Restoration had every reason in the world to refrain from foreign adventures: peace was necessary for its stabilisation; France demanded rest, and her most apparently urgent task was to soothe the suspicions of Europe. To this task the ministers of Louis XVIII devoted themselves with success. By 1818, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Duke of Richelieu obtained the liberation of her territory by the withdrawal of the foreign troops: a great material and moral relief.

The Spanish campaign

In the politics of the Restoration Monarchy three episodes are to be noted: 1. *An intervention in Spain* to restore the absolutism overthrown by the Revolution of 1820, which Châteaubriand obtained from the Congress of Verona against the wish of Villèle (1823), in the hope of winning some military prestige for the monarchy. The campaign had an easy success, being favoured by the Spanish lower classes and the clergy, partisans of an absolute king. It was also inglorious, in spite of the capture of the Cadiz forts, because the "deliverance" of King Ferdinand proved the signal for so extreme an absolutist reaction that the Duke of Angoulême, the general-in-chief of the French army, was ashamed of it. The whole bill had to be paid by France and it was a high one.

The intervention in Greece

2. *The intervention in Greece* was undertaken, in accord with England and Russia, to stop the war by imposing on the sultan a mediation which he did not desire. On the 20th of October, 1827, the three allied fleets destroyed at *Navarino* the Turkish fleet which had refused to disperse, while a French expeditionary corps, commanded by General Maison, occupied Morea. Villèle was far from pleased with these complications, which exhibited the monarchy of Charles X as an upholder of rebels animated with the spirit of the Revolution against their legitimate sovereign. In France, on the other hand, and for these very reasons, Navarino aroused intense enthusiasm.

The Algerian campaign

3. *The Algerian campaign* was undertaken in 1830 to exact retribution for an insult to the French consul, committed by the Dey of Algiers (1827) after a discussion upon their respective interests which had become embittered. Charles X intended not to embark upon any conquest which he might have reason to fear would cause umbrage to England, but

merely to bring an insolent princeling to reason and by the same stroke gain a morsel of that military glory of which the adversaries of the Restoration declared it had far too little. In three weeks all was over: Algiers was taken (July 5); the French losses did not exceed 415 killed and 200 wounded. England looked askance at the installation of France on the African coast, but Charles X did not suffer long from this animosity since he fell from the throne at the end of the month which had begun with this victory.

II

The policy of Louis-Philippe

Difficulties caused by the accession of the king

The Monarchy of July was established in violation of the Conventions of 1815 since it confirmed the expulsion of the Bourbons and showed a revival of the revolutionary spirit, Louis-Philippe figuring as a "king of the barricades." As it seemed to assert the failure of the Conservative policy, it was accepted by the European governments only because England felt relieved to be rid of Charles X: towards the end of his reign the old king was apparently joining forces with Russia, and the Algerian campaign had annoyed Wellington, then at the head of the ministry. Louis-Philippe, receiving recognition from England, received it also, though given with ill grace, from the other sovereigns "*in order not to favour anarchy,*" as was said by the Emperor of Austria, and with some expressions of horror at the circumstances to which the new king owed his rise.

General character of his policy

He was deliberately and obstinately pacific for two principal reasons: 1. He knew that, while the bourgeois, whose devotion he regarded as the corner-stone of his rule, loved to play at soldiers, to parade in uniform and on occasion to grace themselves by a warlike gesture, they would not willingly bear the costs and the risks of real war. 2. He knew, too, that the Allies of 1815, the men of the treaties of Vienna, whose protagonist, Metternich, still governed Austria, looked on him as suspect and on the least sign of trouble from his side would again join hands against France. And, indeed, his position was no easy one to maintain, for he was subject to the pressure of the French Liberals, to whom he owed his throne, and who would have gladly seen him intervene in favour of the peoples struggling to be free. He had hoped that the diplomats would accept the principle of *non-intervention*, thus at once protecting him from foreign aggression of a political character and exempting him from intervention where his "revolutionaries" desired it: for example, in Italy, Belgium, Poland. Unfortunately for his own peace he could not secure the adoption of this view, today accepted in law by every government, recognising as it does the prerogative of every people to arrange its home affairs as it sees fit. Metternich objected that it was only burglars who took exception to the police and incendiaries who protested against firemen.

His principle of non-intervention

Louis-Philippe, moreover, hoped to find in Europe some ally with whom he could come to a *cordial understanding*. The hour had not yet struck for a diplomacy governed by sentiment and yet in accordance with the interests of its diverse participants. Moreover his *cordial understanding* with England and later with Austria brought him nothing but disappointments. In other respects, he drew from his installation in Europe an inference whose scope he exaggerated and which he embodied in a principle of action which proved unfortunate. He had seen that the different sovereigns, certainly ill disposed towards him in 1830, had nevertheless resigned themselves to his occupation of the throne where the Revolution had placed him; and he imagined that diplomacy would in all difficult cases practically yield homage to the *accomplished fact*. For this reason, on many important occasions, he did his utmost to create a state of fact in his own favour, reckoning on its later acceptance as a possible solution. The event frequently proved him

The chimaera of the cordial understanding

His confidence in the *accomplished fact*

wrong, and this procedure, inspired by a policy largely uningenuous and even timorous, brought him some grave failures.

The "Napoleon of peace"

In France his obstinate avoidance of every occasion for war, at the cost of such humiliations as no people willingly endures, gained him the nickname of the "Napoleon of peace." He probably showed excellent sense in restraining the impetuosity and tempering the too enterprising ardour of his Liberals. But this brought him neither popularity at home nor consideration abroad. As a whole his policy was not fortunate.

A. *Repercussions of the Revolution of 1830 in Europe*

The French Revolution of 1830, bursting upon a Europe where the system of concert known as the *Holy Alliance* still reigned supreme, raised high hopes in the hearts of Liberals of all lands and gave new courage to those ethnic units which aspired to national life. It had thus been the signal for insurrection, notably in Belgium, in Poland and the Papal States. The Liberals of France, faithful to the tradition of the Convention, would have liked to help men inspired by the same ideas as themselves; but Louis-Philippe was not to be moved.

1. The question of Belgium

The Belgian revolution sorely imperilled the pacificism of the king, the promptings of principle in favour of active intervention by France being reinforced by considerations of material interest. Several leaders of the Belgian movement advocated annexation of their country to France, while the French "patriots" saw in such an act the longed-for revenge for the treaties of 1815.

The hopes of Louis-Philippe

Louis-Philippe himself, while determined to disallow any such hazardous proceeding, lent willing ears to another plan, that of making an independent kingdom of Belgium, and conferring its crown on a French prince, the Duke of Nemours, his second son. The King of Holland, however, made ruler of Belgium by the treaties of 1815, invoked those agreements and appealed to the signatories to stand by them.

The settlement of the affair

Talleyrand, ambassador in London, by an assurance that France would not intervene alone or in her individual interest, induced the English Cabinet to agree to a Congress for the settlement of the Belgian question. Thus while all danger of complications was avoided, Louis-Philippe was obliged to refuse on behalf of the Duke of Nemours the throne offered by Belgium (February 17). He undertook to expel the Dutch from Antwerp (1832) and he gained nothing from the affair but the marriage of one of his daughters to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who became king of the Belgians under the name of Leopold I.

2. The Polish insurrection

In Poland he refused to intervene, hard as the Liberals tried to induce him to do so.

"C'est la Pologne et son peuple fidèle,
Qui tant de fois a pour nous combattu."[1]

Thus sang Béranger, the popular poet, expressing a sentiment shared by most Frenchmen, while Casimir Delavigne composed the *Varsovienne* in the same spirit. The newspapers were unanimous that, when Poland called upon France, the credit and honour of France demanded a response. Louis-Philippe knew well that his kingdom was in no state to incur the risks of a great European war "*to succour the oppressed*" and promote "*the independence of peoples*" as the *National* demanded. He held his own till the Russians had crushed the insurrection and the Liberals could only console themselves for their disappointment by welcoming with open arms the Polish refugees who flocked into France.

3. Italian affairs

In Italy, likewise, the insurgents of Romagna, Umbria and the Marches hoped for support from France; the French minister, Lafitte, was inclined to come to their assistance, but here, too, the king was determined to hold aloof and had his way. Casimir-Périer, Lafitte's successor (March, 1831), though he did not make a *casus belli* of the Austrian intervention which overcame the rebels, protested against it and when it was repeated in 1832, on the revival of agitation, he occupied the pontifical port of Ancona "as security" and Louis-Philippe replied to the recriminations of the Austrian ambassador by a threat "*to uncage the tiger*"; to wit, the Revolution. In the end matters were arranged to the advantage of the absolutists, but without war.

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[1] It is Poland and its faithful people,
Who have so often fought for us.

The impression made by the attitude of Louis-Philippe

In these three cases the attitude of official France, however wise and prudent, had not erred on the side of dignity and generosity; it added nothing to the prestige of Louis-Philippe in Europe. Foreign governments were becoming convinced that his determination to abstain from war would be proof against any insult whatever and the "patriots" of France felt that the hour had not yet come when they could wipe out the treaties of 1815.

B. *The Eastern Question*

Mehemet Ali and France

In the foreign policy of Louis-Philippe the Eastern question was predominant: it occupied the period between 1832 and 1840. The duplicity and indecision of the king brought him ultimately into a most awkward position. *Mehemet Ali*, who wished to Europeanise Egypt, had requested that some French engineers and officers might give him the help that he needed; and thus was led to desire an understanding with France as to the settlement of some questions of concern to the Turkish Empire. But Mehemet, having in vain demanded the governorship of Syria, promised by Sultan Mahmoud—as a special compensation for the losses suffered by the Egyptian fleet at Navarino—determined to occupy the country (1831). War between vassal and suzerain followed and the latter was defeated. Louis-Philippe regarded this victory as the precursor of a restoration of the Ottoman Empire by the Pasha of Egypt greatly to the advantage of France, and, on the resumption of war, in 1839, and the further victory of Mehemet, he secretly encouraged him to push his advantage, in the belief that Europe would defer to the *accomplished fact*. But neither Austria nor Russia nor England desired the

Development of the Turko-Egyptian conflict domination of Turkey by Mehemet Ali; and all did their utmost to arrest his advance. France ostensibly joined them, but her representative in Alexandria continued to give encouraging assurances to the pasha. When the English minister *Palmerston* realised the facts of the situation he took it upon himself to settle the question regardless of France. The other powers hesitated, but ultimately yielded to the persistence of Palmerston, who was well aware that Louis-Philippe, however annoyed, would never resort to arms. It was in this way that a convention, signed in London (July 15), of which the French ambassador, Guizot, was notified only when the dispositions for its enforcement had been made, settled the terms of an ultimatum addressed to Mehemet Ali and the conditions of peace imposed on him. Thiers, then minister, supported by public opinion, began arming; never, it seemed, would he put up with the insolent outrage thus inflicted upon him by Palmerston, but Louis-Philippe was on the watch and when the danger grew acute, broke with his "*little minister*," ordered the French fleet back to Toulon, seeing that on some occasions "*guns go off by themselves*," and instructed Guizot to settle the affair. Mehemet, abandoned and indeed betrayed, if not by France, at any rate, by her king, had to accept the conditions of the Allies (November, 1840). It was not till the Convention of London had thus been put into execution that Guizot achieved "*the return of France to the European Concert*" by obtaining a place for her at the table where the *Convention of the Straits* (July, 1841) was drawn up and signed, thus establishing peace in the Near East.

Policy of Louis-Philippe

The convention of London

The liquidation of the affair

C. *The cordial understanding*

The bourgeoisie and the aristocratic "patriots" did not forgive England their disappointment and humiliation, and they viewed without pleasure the endeavours of Louis-Philippe and Guizot to base their foreign policy on a *cordial understanding* with the Cabinet in London. Queen Victoria had been to France; the king went to return her visit in England: both

1. With England

demonstrations of little significance and, as several incidents soon showed, nursed largely on illusions.[2] Popular sentiment in France had reverted to the old animosity against "*perfidious Albion*" of the early century.

2. With Austria

In 1846 Louis-Philippe gave up being cordial to Palmerston, who was returning to office after an eclipse of some years, and bethought himself of an understanding, no less cordial, with Austria. Guizot wrote to Metternich proposing a prospective understanding in view of the Socialist peril. The Revolution of 1848 put an end to this extraordinary transaction between the "king of the barricades" and the inflexible champion of reaction in Europe.

D. *The amends: the conquest of Algeria*

For the many miscarriages of his European policy, Louis-Philippe sought amends in Algeria, which he started deliberately to conquer after 1834 despite the ill-humour of England. He was resisted by a man of energy and intelligence, *Abd-el-Kader*, who held out unsubdued till 1847, and he was hampered by a climate not yet properly investigated and more deadly to the French troops than the bullets of the Arabs. Nevertheless, the occupation of the country was well advanced by the end of the reign and had provided several fine feats of arms, most welcome to French public opinion and enheartening for the army, far from proud of the part it had played since 1815.

General results of the policy of Louis-Philippe

The foreign policy of Louis-Philippe certainly not only lowered his own prestige and that of France in Europe but was also one factor in the fall of the Monarchy of July, owing to the unpopularity which it brought him. Yet it did the country material and immediate service: the eighteen years of peace which he enforced on her allowed her to repair her economic and moral forces.

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[2] In particular the affair of *the right of search, the Pritchard affair* and that of *the Spanish marriages,* on whose details it is needless to dwell, caused acute irritation on both sides of the Channel.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF FRANCE SINCE 1815

III

The Second Republic and the Empire

A. *The Republic*

The pacific attitude of the Republic

The Second Republic could not be under many illusions as to the sentiments aroused by its birth in the hearts of the sovereigns of Europe. It was well for it that the understanding of 1815 could not possibly be revived; Austria and Prussia were out of the field owing to revolutions which broke out in both, and echoed the *Days of February* of Paris. Elsewhere, England and Russia had just then no great desire to act together anywhere: the tsar made a stand for absolutist restoration. Palmerston accordingly played the Liberal and the French Republic profited thereby. For the rest, it continued the policy of prudence and resistance to the inconsiderate ardour of demonstrators demanding intervention in Italy and in Poland. Lamartine, in the name of the Provisional Government, drew up a declaration affirming the determination of the Republic to meddle in no one's business. And the internal difficulties encountered by the new government absorbed its whole energy from the first. It was not until 1849 that the anti-Republican majority of the Legislative Assembly and Louis Bonaparte the President decided on intervention in Rome to put an end to the Republic established on the preceding 9th of February. The city was taken on the 30th of June and absolutism reestablished contrary to the wishes of Louis-Napoleon who had wanted the restored pope to grant liberal institutions and whom the Curia deceived. An inglorious campaign induced by the desire to prevent Austria from appropriating its whole merit to herself and further a contradiction to the pacifist proclamation of Lamartine.

Intervention in Rome

B. *The Empire*

(a) *The accession of Napoleon III;* his promises of peace

The Second Empire announced itself, too, as a régime of peace. Louis-Napoleon, in a celebrated speech delivered at Bordeaux on the 10th of October, 1852, during a tour to pave the way for a restoration of the Empire, protested against those "*malevolent persons*" who, he said, went about reiterating that *the Empire is war!* He gave them the lie with the energetic contradiction that *the Empire is peace!* Yet, between 1852 and 1870, Napoleon III took a direct part in three great European wars (in Crimea, in Italy and in France) and in several others elsewhere in the world: in Mexico, China, Cochin-China, Syria, Rome, Algeria. And the profits which accrued were far from proportionate to the activity exercised. Napoleon III, obsessed by the record of his uncle, wished to become *the arbiter of Europe*, and to thrust his *principle of nationism* upon her. That is to say, steeped in ideas learnt in his youth from the Italian *Carbonari*, he was strong for the *right of peoples to deal with their own destinies.* As one of the line of Napoleon he detested the treaties of 1815 and dreamed that he might abrogate them. And he very well understood how to turn his *policy of nationalism* to profitable account, ignoring the truth that it must be disinterested or nothing. His avidity for *compensations* on all sides laid his diplomacy open to the severe if not unjust description of it as a *politique de pourboire* (policy of tips) applied to it by Bismarck.

(b) *The political ideas of the emperor*

His diplomatic habits

In foreign politics, while he was extremely jealous of his own authority, his views were no less vague and his will no less weak than in home affairs. In these, as in those, he was always sentimental, easily influenced in divergent directions, dilatory in deciding between courses, prone to play for effect and to be theatrical in utterance, and generally ill informed and easy to deceive: neither Cavour nor Bismarck failed to take advantage of this and he was a laughing-stock to both. Careful consideration of his policy reveals it as a series of one expedient after another and improvisations of the moment; in the end it was disastrous for France.

The anxieties of Europe in 1852

The re-establishment of the Empire to the benefit of a Napoleon could give little pleasure to the other powers;[3]

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[3] The treaties of 1815 and 1818 had stipulated for the perpetual exclusion of the Bonaparte family from the throne of France. In calling himself

two of these in particular, Prussia and Russia, showed open anxiety and made difficulties about recognising it. Once again, as before, England led the way, put an end to their hesitations and silenced their objections. She had received from Napoleon III a formal assurance that his intentions were pacific. The emperor knew well that he was looked on as an *upstart* in the world of sovereigns: the tsar refused to give him the appellation of "*my good brother,*" customary among kings; no reigning house was disposed to accommodate him with one of its daughters when he contemplated marriage. He accordingly concluded that, to assert himself effectively in Europe, he must resort to war.

(c) *The Crimean War*

For this an opportunity was offered him by the ambition of Russia over which Turkey was then extremely uneasy (spring of 1853). He made an alliance with England and Turkey, gratifying, incidentally, his resentment for the recent ill offices of the Tsar Nicholas I (April, 1854). The *Crimean War* began in the spring of 1854. It was so called because its leading episode was the long and painful siege (September, 1854—September, 1855) of Sebastopol in the Crimea. The Tsar Nicholas had died (March 2, 1855); Alexander II, his successor, under pressure from Austria, ultimately accepted the peace which the Allies seemed incapable of enforcing. It was debated and settled at a Congress held in Paris in 1856. Napoleon then made a figure at playing first fiddle in Europe, to his own great gratification; but as he had entered the war with no positive object to fight for, the treaty of the 30th of March, 1856, brought him no material advantage. On the other hand the sovereigns no longer resented his existence: his position among them was won.

The Congress of Paris (1856)

(d) *The Italian War*
How the question arose

While the Congress was at work an enticing opportunity occurred: *Cavour*, minister to the King of Sardinia, who had

Napoleon III the emperor took as actual the theoretical reign of Napoleon II, which the Allies would never accept as such.

sent a regiment to Sebastopol merely to secure the right to be present and have a voice in the peace deliberations, had drawn a moving picture of the lamentable state of Italy; thus bringing under discussion the domination and even the presence of Austria in the peninsula. Napoleon had always taken an interest in Italy; moreover he felt he could find no finer field for an experiment with his principle of nationalism and no better opportunity of making a substantial breach in the treaties of 1815. He had an interview with Cavour at Plombières,[4] and, between the two, an alliance was concluded, a plan of campaign prepared, and the Austrian territories which were to fall into their hands disposed of beforehand. They were to be taken by Sardinia, while France was to recover Savoy and eventually Nice if Sardinia should annex Parma and Modena.

The hostilities

England mediated in vain; war broke out in the spring of 1859 and a large French army entered Italy. The operations were ill managed on both sides, but they brought Napoleon III a few victories, not all equally brilliant, but all enthusiastically received by French Chauvinism: *Montebello*, *Palestro*, above all *Magenta*, which compelled the Austrians to evacuate Lombardy, and that of *Solferino* (June 24) which finally disheartened them. Napoleon himself was alarmed by the losses among his troops, and hardly reassured as to the abilities of his generals, who quarrelled incessantly among themselves. In another quarter, the mobilisation of Prussia gave him cause for anxiety on the Rhine. He determined to expedite the end of hostilities. At an interview with the Emperor of Austria, at *Villafranca* (July 11) general conditions of peace were agreed on; the details being settled later by the treaties of Zurich (October 16 and November 10).

Peace (1859)

Difficulties in Italy

Sardinia, obtaining only Lombardy, was dissatisfied. Had not Napoleon said to Cavour: "*Italy shall be free from the Alps*

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[4] A health resort with medicinal baths, chief town of canton in the department of Vosges.

to the Adriatic." And Austria had kept Venetia. Cavour resigned but stood ready to return. All Italy embarked on a huge agitation to supply by operations of its own the defects in the treaties, and through plebiscites or provisional Assemblies meeting in Tuscany, Modena, Parma, Romagna, and in the kingdom of Naples (whence Garibaldi expelled King Francis II) declared for the annexation of nearly the whole peninsula to Sardinia. All this was, of course, in flagrant contravention to the agreements made between the two emperors at Villafranca, but Cavour, now again in office (January, 1860) induced Napoleon to accept the accomplished fact, as in due accordance with his own principles; and Napoleon, when he had annexed Nice and Savoy—their consent being given by plebiscite (March, 1860)—had no longer any objection to make to the annexation of Southern Italy, which was carried out in the autumn of the same year, nor to the proclamation of the *Kingdom of Italy* which took place in February, 1861.

The Roman question

This regrouping, however, of Italian territory under King Victor Emmanuel brought forward a grave question and placed Napoleon III in an embarrassing position. Rome, as the historic capital of Italy, was claimed by Italian patriots. But Rome belonged to the pope; he had just lost Umbria and the Marches; but he had retained *the patrimony of St. Peter*, and he emphatically declared that he would not and could not part with an atom of temporal power. Next, in France, the Ultramontane party, very powerful, and able to count on support from the empress, insisted that it was Napoleon's duty at all costs to debar the Italians from this sacrilegious usurpation. He himself tried for a compromise. As the Italian Liberals and the Garibaldian Republicans justified their claim to Rome by their desire to deliver the Romans "*from priestly tyranny,*" he returned to his old idea of a Liberal constitution to be granted by the pope. Unfortunately, the pontiff refused this concession, while the Italians considered it inadequate. Ultimately, Napoleon, not daring to abandon Pius IX, now tied by his own *non possumus*, and fearing a decisive stroke by Garibaldi, put pressure upon Victor Emmanuel to induce him to accept Florence for his capital and to leave the Roman question to the future. This is known as *the Convention of September, 1864:* France, who had kept a garrison in Rome since 1849, was to withdraw her troops within two years; the King of Italy on his side engaged to make no attack on the city, and, if needful, to defend it.

The Convention of September, 1864

Results of the Italian policy of Napoleon III

The pope was reassured for the moment, but he never forgave France for failing to secure the restitution of his State in entirety. To the Ultramontanes Napoleon III became "Pontius Pilatus" or "Judas." The Italians, on their side, resented his coldness in the cause of their unity, and the way in which he had allowed his hand to be forced, or rather his complaisance to be bought by the *pourboire* of Savoy and Nice instead of generously and liberally keeping the promises of Plombières; they resented, too, his having deprived them of Venice and stopped them at the gates of Rome. He had expected the infant kingdom to be overflowingly grateful but was disappointed: the manner in which for long months he had dragged on without making up his mind pleased nobody; his half measures satisfied nobody, himself included. And *from this time onwards his future was to be one of unredeemed failure and humiliation.*

(e) *The policy of compensations*

1. Intervention in Asia

In compensation for his European mishaps he had turned eagerly to a policy of expansion outside Europe. The year of 1860 alone included three campaigns at a distance: the first in China, the second in Cochin-China, the third in Syria. England obtained the profit from the first and prevented Napoleon from exploiting the last, being unwilling that France should establish herself in the Levant. A partial success in Cochin-China (three provinces ceded by the Emperor of Annam, Tu-duc, on the 5th of June, 1862) was an inadequate consolation.

2. The affair of Mexico

Its origins

But the imperial policy was already involved in an enterprise of the widest implications—the conquest of Mexico—into which Napoleon had been driven (1861) as a consequence of complex and scarce avowable intrigues, with which "men of business" had much more to do than diplomatists. He lent himself to it in view of the possibility of erecting a vassal empire of his own between the two Americas, and because it gave him, apparently, a good chance of engaging Austria on his side by conferring the new imperial crown on one of her archdukes, Maximilian.

The campaign

An expedition, in many respects arduous, ended in the capture of Mexico (June 5, 1863); but difficulties started up on all sides. The Mexicans, to an overwhelming majority, declined to accept Maximilian and began a *guerilla* war in which the French troops, enervated and demoralised, fell into a state of pitiable slackness and indiscipline. Their leader, Bazaine, with Maximilian, relied on severity for the crushing of resistance; but made it only more bitter. In other respects they agreed ill together and Bazaine, a soldier-politician, with designs of his own upon the country, intrigued surreptitiously against the new emperor.

Complications

Shrewder heads soon saw that the business was becoming a mere gamble with disaster. Napoleon, however, persisted in regarding it as the "*supreme inspiration of his reign*" and his familiars—particularly Rouher—were prodigal in favourable and proportionately imprudent assurances: "*The Mexican campaign has conquered a great country for civilisation*"; or: "*The French army will not return to our shores till it has accomplished its task and triumphed over all resistance.*"

Protest by the United States

It next came to pass that the United States, who, unable to move owing to the War of Secession, had made no protest in 1861 against an enterprise in direct contravention of the Monroe Doctrine, made one on the 7th of April, 1864. They reiterated their objections on the 28th of October, 1865, and, two months later, invited Napoleon to recall his troops. He promised to do so but delayed, and the government of Washington warned him "*Not to postpone for one moment the promised retreat of his military forces.*" It became evident that serious complications must immediately ensue if the liquidation of the affair was delayed any longer. The emperor saw this and, on the 14th of February, 1867, in his opening speech to the Chambers, had the audacity to declare, "*I have spontaneously decided to recall our army corps.*"

The liquidation

On the 11th of March following, the operation was carried out. Maximilian fell into the hands of his enemies and was shot at Querétaro on the 19th of June, 1867; his wife went mad. Nothing more disastrous and more piteous can be imagined; even honour was not saved.

(f) *The failures in Europe*

While the tragedy of the Mexican venture was thus drawing to an end, Napoleon III suffered in Europe itself some great humiliations which he felt keenly and attributed, not without reason, mainly to the influence of the Prussian minister, *Bismarck.*

1. The affairs of Poland (1863)

In 1863 Poland had revolted afresh. In most European countries opinion had declared itself against the tsar. Prussia, alone, under the influence of Bismarck, had ranged on his side. Napoleon at first took the attitude of protector-in-chief to the Poles and wrote a personal letter in their favour to Alexander II; this proving ineffective, he proposed military action to the powers. England would have none of it, and the Russian government, knowing this, was dilatory in replying to the diplomatic notes which it received. Finally, Napoleon put forward the idea of a Congress for the revision of the treaties of 1815; to which England did not consent. This left him in an isolated position, powerless to do anything against the tsar, whose feelings he had wounded by showing himself ready to raise Europe against him.

2. The Austro-Prussian conflict

The conflict between Austria and Prussia, brought on by

Bismarck over the settlement of the question of the Danish duchies, which became ominous of trouble towards the middle of 1865, struck Napoleon III as an excellent opportunity for posing as arbitrator between the great powers. For once he was right. But an intervention of this kind demanded a clarity of view, a modicum of insight and a spirit of decision not at all in his character. When the agreement of *Gastein* (August, 1865) had for the moment postponed a rupture by dividing the Danish duchies between the two rivals, he protested on the ground of the principle of nationalities and the right of peoples. Bismarck, who professed a quite opposite theory and proclaimed that *might was right*, took no notice of the protest.

The interview of Biarritz

The Prussian minister, however, was not quite easy in his mind over the possible action of France and Italy in the event of his deciding on war with Austria. The old king, William, hesitated at the prospect of a coalition against him. Bismarck therefore proceeded to ascertain for himself the disposition of Napoleon III. This was *the interview of Biarritz* (October, 1865). The astute Prussian flattered the political hobbies of the emperor: the creation of a united Italy; the demolition of the treaties of 1815; the acquisition of territorial advantages. He was careful not to commit himself to any precise promise authenticated by any convention; but he secured a free hand in Italy and the neutrality of France. Napoleon, extremely ill-informed, believed Austria to be stronger than Prussia, and imagined that the factor of Italy would supply the counterpoise needed. The prophetic warnings of Thiers as to the dangers of this policy were insufficient to open his eyes.

Sadowa (July 3, 1866)

Events were to do so. Prussia, feeling safe on the side of the Rhine, was able to concentrate her whole force on Austria and on the 3d of July came the dramatic blow of the battle of *Sadowa:* Austria found herself virtually out of the fight except in so far as a prompt conclusion of peace with Italy allowed her to concentrate a new army. She requested Napoleon to mediate for the conclusion of such a peace and handed over to him Venetia, at that time the chief object of Italian aspirations.

Indecision and impotence of Napoleon III

The French emperor could, as Bismarck later admitted, have stopped Prussia in her course by making a military demonstration on the Rhine, then stripped of all troops; but he was ill and through bad health less able than ever to make up his mind. Moreover, there was among his entourage a vigilant Italo-Prussian party which represented to him that, by going too far, he would run serious risks, with his army still impaired by the Mexican expedition. He imagined, too, that negotiations competently conducted would bring him, in fulfilment of Bismarck's vague promises, substantial advantages. For some days he wavered between conflicting courses, a prey to "*patriotic anguish.*" In the end, seeing that Italy was averse to a separate peace, he offered his mediation which was accepted by the belligerents (July 14).

The peace; Napoleon's deception by Bismarck

It resulted in the preliminaries of *Nikolsburg* (July 26) confirmed by the treaty of *Prague* (August 23): Bismarck had in reality imposed his own conditions. And when he was requested by Napoleon to keep his promise, actually renewed during the negotiations, to leave France free to expand on the left bank of the Rhine, he contrived that rumours of the transaction should be disseminated in Germany; thus provoking a movement of opinion which compelled the French government to disavow its desires.

The search for a "pourboire"

Total failure

Napoleon then thought of laying hands upon Belgium and Luxembourg. Bismarck caused him to send written proposals which he did not proceed with, but carefully preserved. The emperor thus got nothing and realised that the Prussian had deceived him; but he would not admit this failure and his Minister for Foreign Affairs, La Valette, issued a circular (September 16, 1866) proclaiming that the aim of French policy had been attained, since the progress of peoples towards self-determination had been favoured by recent events and that Germany was now "*split into three pieces.*"[5] Now Bismarck had, during the preceding month, secretly signed treaties of offensive and defensive alliance with the Southern German States; and though this was not yet generally known, the circular of La Valette covered Napoleon with ridicule. It was worse still when, in March, 1867, Bismarck, in response to a boast of Rouher's that the "*three pieces*" would never be united, published the treaties in question.

3. The affair of Luxembourg

The emperor had not finally renounced Luxembourg, an old imperial territory which in 1815 had been included in the Germanic Confederation, but, at the same time, had been made over as personal property to the King of Holland in compensation for the annexation by Prussia of the German domains of his house (Orange-Nassau). The city of Luxembourg, regarded as a federal fortress, had received a Prussian garrison which had stayed on after the dissolution of the Germanic Confederation in 1866. Bismarck himself had turned the ambition of Napoleon to the acquisition of this territory, and its owner, incidentally, desired nothing better than to sell it. The Prussian Minister, as long as the constitution of the Federation of North Germany was giving him anxiety, encouraged the emperor's illusions, while retarding, by procrastination of various kinds, the conclusion of a final agreement. No sooner was he master of the situation in Germany than he prepared to liquidate the affair of Luxembourg. Napoleon III himself gave him the opportunity. Believing himself able to rely on the agreement which he was on the point of signing with William of Holland, he was so imprudent as to publish the news. Bismarck immediately provoked an interpellation in the Reichstag (April 1), and the King of Prussia yielding ostensibly to the will of Germany put his *veto* on the transaction (April 3). All that Napoleon gained was the evacuation of the fortress of Luxembourg by the Prussian garrison. He declared himself well satisfied. Indeed he had learnt to be contented with little.

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[5] The treaty of Prague provided for a confederation of Northern Germany, round Prussia, a confederation of South Germany, and for the future exclusion of Austria from Germany. These are the "three pieces."

4. Napoleon's resentment against Bismarck

He seeks for allies

In reality he cherished a deep and very understandable resentment against Bismarck; he only awaited an opportunity for revenge and even endeavoured to provoke one. He cast around him for allies. He relied, far too much, upon Denmark, still unconsoled for the loss of Schleswig, and on the Southern German States which appeared to find the Prussian hegemony onerous. Elsewhere, he hoped to bring Austria to his side by the promise of revenge for Sadowa and he imagined that the gratitude of Italy was already his own. In the spring of 1869, he entered into negotiations with the two latter powers with a view to the conclusion of a triple alliance. Austria was indisposed for any but a defensive alliance, and Italy demanded, before pledging herself, the withdrawal of the French garrison from Rome and the abandonment by France of the Convention of September, 1864; in other words she desired her hands to be free in order to lay them upon Rome. The party of the empress prevented Napoleon from acceding to this concession and negotiations remained in suspense, while Bismarck represented to the Italians that the boon they so longed for would be theirs only on that day when France would no longer be able to prevent them from taking it.

5. The war of 1870

How it became inevitable

The rupture which followed, in 1870, between France and Prussia had thus long been preparing and indeed had been imminent since 1866. Everyone in France believed it necessary: the emperor because he was still sore over the failures which the cunning and ill faith of Bismarck had brought upon him; the empress because she believed that her son would never reign unless France, by diplomacy or by arms, shattered the insolence of Prussia; the politicians, like Thiers, because they judged it indispensable that France should make an effort to regain her liberty of action and her prestige in Europe. The only difference of opinion was as to the moment to be chosen. Bismarck on his side regarded a war with France as the best road to the completion of his work in Germany and, in cold blood, without any belief at all in the arguments which he used, he did his utmost to arouse on his side of the Rhine an outburst of hatred towards the "*hereditary enemy.*" He relied on this feeling to counteract such prejudices against Prussia as remained in South Germany. Thus peace was at the mercy of any incident which might occur.

The occasion

At this very moment, the minister, Ollivier, an advocate of a policy of conciliation, had just declared that peace had never been more secure in Europe, assured as it was by the respect felt by all governments for treaties (June 30) when the *Hohenzollern incident* occurred and the storm broke loose.

The Hohenzollern incident

The Spanish throne was then vacant; in the spring of 1869 the Spanish provisional government had offered it to Leopold of Hohenzollern, of the Catholic branch of Sigmaringen, who refused it. But yielding to solicitations he finally accepted it (beginning of July). Napoleon III was much moved by the news. He despatched a note to Berlin, as though it were Prussia who was attempting to establish one of her princes in Spain, declaring that France could not tolerate a reconstitution of the Empire of the Charles Quint! These were big words and received further emphasis from newspaper comments and a "patriotic" demonstration in the Chamber. For the rest, other powers, notably England, advised Leopold to withdraw his acceptance and on the 12th of July he published an official declaration of renunciation.

The exigencies of Napoleon: the mission of Benedetti

All seemed over; but Grammont, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, believing the whole thing to be merely one of Bismarck's machinations, had entered upon a negotiation which he was unwilling to drop, under the belief that it would bring him "*an immense success.*" He had sent Benedetti, his ambassador in Prussia, to King William, then at the waters of Ems, to beg him that he would formally advise Leopold to decline the Spanish proposal (July 7). The king replied that he was in no way entitled to take any such step, and that France should apply to Madrid (July 9). Grammont insisted, demanding that William should *forbid* his cousin "*to persist in his candidature*" (July 10). The king repeated that the decision lay entirely with Leopold alone, from whom he was expecting a letter, adding, moreover, that the warlike preparations of France were of ill omen for the peace which he hoped to maintain (July 11). Next day it was known that Leopold had refused. Forthwith Grammont changed ground and demanded that the King of Prussia should undertake to prevent his relative from renewing his candidature, if the opportunity should recur. The king replied to Benedetti that he could not pledge himself "*without any time limit and for any event*" (July 13). And, Benedetti persisting, he caused it to be conveyed to him that he had no more to say on the matter. He intended no discourtesy and, before leaving Ems, on the same day, he received him for a few minutes in the waiting-room at the railway-station and assured him that negotiations would be continued through the usual channels if France so desired. The old king was not anxious for a plunge into the doubtful adventure of war, but Bismarck, certain that the Prussian army was ready and that the French was not, thought the opportunity a good one. And it was he who, by the manner in which he drew up the report of the interview at Ems, for communication to the press,[6] provoked, as he intended, an outburst of indignation in France.

The Ems despatch

The ministers completely lost their heads; in the Chamber

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[6] This is improperly called the *falsification of the Ems despatch.* Bismarck never falsified any despatch; he merely drew up a one-sided *communiqué,* which seemed to show that King William had broken with the French ambassador.

The rupture (July 15)

the Chauvinists maintained with vehemence that France had been insulted in the person of her ambassador. Their clamours smothered the voices of a few reasonable men like Thiers, Gambetta and Buffet, who demanded that they should wait for Benedetti's version of the facts before jumping to a conclusion on a mere opinion; Ollivier declared that he accepted responsibility for the war "*with a light heart and with confidence*," while crowds sang the *Marseillaise* in the streets and shouted: "*to Berlin!*" Bismarck had his desire; war was declared on Germany by France on the 15th of July.

Isolation of France

France was alone in the world: England, apprised by Bismarck of the recent designs of Napoleon upon Belgium, remained neutral; the tsar, a personal friend of King William's, and badly disposed towards the French emperor, did likewise; Austria might perhaps have decided to come into line if Italy had led the way, and Italy would have marched if France had delivered up Rome, to which Napoleon would not consent. Negotiations were still proceeding when the first defeats took place (August) and put an end to them. Grammont had proudly proclaimed that France would have all the allies she desired after her first victories; his prediction was fulfilled but in a negative sense.

The debacle

The French army had been disorganised since the Mexican campaign. In equipment and technique it was still much inferior to the German; the appalling series of defeats which it suffered can surprise no one who looks for their causes. In a few weeks, the Germans, marching under the leadership of Prussia, conquered Alsace and Lorraine; shut an army commanded by Bazaine into Metz; enveloped another army and compelled it to capitulate at *Sedan* in the valley of the Meuse after a blunder of Mac-Mahon's had led it into this trap; Napoleon III himself was among the prisoners (September 2).

The capitulation

The imperial government fell to pieces. Resistance, continued against all hope, by the Government of National Defence, whose soul was Gambetta, could do no more than delay a German victory: Metz capitulated on the 29th of October, its strong defences rendered ineffectual by the vacillation and treason of Bazaine. Paris, blockaded and shelled, surrendered to starvation on the 28th of January. The *Preliminaries of Versailles,* discussed between Thiers and Bismarck, were adjusted and determined by the *treaty of Frankfort* (May 10, 1871). France surrendered Alsace (excluding Belfort) and part of Lorraine, in spite of a formal protest from the inhabitants: she paid a war indemnity of 5 milliards of gold francs, an enormous sum for the time, and accorded considerable commercial advantages to Germany.

(g) *The results of the policy of Napoleon III*

On the 16th of January, in the Gallery of Mirrors, at the palace of Versailles, the King of Prussia accepted the title and the function of *Emperor of Germany* from the German princes. Russia also profited by the defeat of France to liberate herself from the treaty of 1856 while Italy took possession of Rome (September). History records no more disastrous political bankruptcy than that which thus liquidated the ambitious and vacillating diplomacy of the Second Empire.

IV

The Third Republic in Europe

The Third Republic long felt the effects of this downfall. It stood alone in Europe, confronted with a preponderant and menacing Germany, an Italy kept suspicious by the Ultramontane agitation in favour of the Pope-King, of an England prompt to frown on her first colonial enterprises, while other powers stood indifferent. European politics, whose chief features were the alliance between the three Emperors of Germany, Austria and Russia (1871-76) and a fresh Eastern crisis (1875-78), went on their way uninfluenced by France. In 1879, Austria and Germany concluded a secret alliance against Russia; in 1883 Italy joined them, thus constituting a *Triple Alliance* aimed against France no less than against Russia and regarded in the former country as a permanent menace.

Three capital events stand out among the details of French politics between 1871 and 1914.

1. The new Colonial Empire

1. *The formation of a new Colonial Empire in Asia* (Indo-China) and in *Africa* (Tunisia, the Congo, the Sudan, Madagascar, Morocco). These conquests provoked disputes of a more or less serious nature: that of Tunis (1881-1883) with Italy; that of the Congo and its Hinterland with England (particularly in 1898 upon arrival of a small French column at *Fashoda* on the upper Nile); that of Morocco with Germany (in 1905 and 1911). They nevertheless gave France some new resources and some considerable means of action.

2. The Russian Alliance

2. *The Russian Alliance*, whose first origin is undoubtedly to be found in the tsar's displeasure with Bismarck after the treaty of Berlin of 1878. From 1891 onwards several significant demonstrations testified to the advent of closer relations between the Russian and French governments, and European opinion was persuaded that the *Triplice* (Triple Alliance) would be faced henceforth with a *Duplice* (Double Alliance); the latter, a singular combination, at first sight, uniting, as it did, two States so completely different in political system and in spirit, but, at that time, indispensable as a counterbalance to German power and its rapid advance with the growth of German economic prosperity. It was not indeed without drawbacks. There was danger that it might entangle France in the Balkan embroilments—whence, in Bismarck's opinion, the next European war would arise—and it seemed likely to estrange her from England who, by a conflict of interests, apparently irreconcilable, was ranged against Russia in Asia. The Russian alliance, which was taken as definitive after the visit of Nicholas II to Paris in 1896, did France the immediate service

of insuring her against any such sudden German aggression as had several times seemed likely since 1871.

3. The approach to England

3. *The approach to England* was prepared for by the Convention of the 6th of April, 1904. The two countries had mutually agreed to settle forthwith all questions throughout the world on which they differed. King Edward VII, personally attached to France by old and strong sympathies, was also deeply disquieted by the maritime policy of the German emperor, William II, by the formidable development of the industrial and commercial activity of Germany, and by the spread of *Pan-Germanism*. He foresaw that in no short time England might be obliged to place herself in open opposition to enterprises which might menace her prosperity and her security. At this moment the Russo-Japanese War (1905) gave a long relief to the apprehensions aroused in the English by the Asiatic policy of the tsars: *the whale* was foiling *the elephant* without fighting him. There was thus now nothing to preclude the British Empire from joining a Franco-Russian coalition. Thus, with no positive treaty, but with the object of being ready for the German danger, a *Triple Entente* came about as a balance to the *Triple Alliance*. And indeed, as Italy came into somewhat closer relations with England, owing to her interests in the Mediterranean, she, too, tended, owing to the Franco-English understanding, to take up a more amicable and unsuspicious attitude towards France.

Conclusion

In 1914

It was thus that our country, on the eve of the war of 1914, sickened with war by three invasions in fifty-six years and now of set purpose so pacific that ideas of revenge on Germany were only promulgated by a handful of Chauvinists with no serious influence over national opinion, had regained her place in Europe. She had linked potent interests to her own and could await, without too much anxiety, the attack for which Germany was patiently preparing, which the clear-sighted had for several years declared to be coming, which others obstinately refused to believe possible, and which the immense majority of Frenchmen could not believe to be so near.

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CONCLUSION

I

France a historical entity

AT the end of our long enquiry we can say with confidence that *France is a historical entity* far more than *a geographical personality.* The physical equilibrium conferred on her by nature has merely assisted the action of the historical forces which have moulded her into a nation and aided the establishment of her ethnic unity.

Complexity and harmony

While the French people have arisen from a somewhat multifarious mixture of constituent elements, they now form a solid and harmonious whole. In the same way, French civilisation is a synthesis of diverse elements blended and welded together by time. The variety in aptitude of the race is reflected in the diversity of the aspects of its culture. Neither here nor there does any exclusive character, any intolerant temper intervene to impede the free play of her secular attainments and her successive assimilations.

The part of her ancestors

To her *Celtic ancestors* France owes her enquiring mind, her disdain of hidden dangers, the lack of foresight which has often brought her suffering, her delight in expression and criticism—a criticism which does not spare herself—her courage with its occasional imprudence and bravado; to *Rome,* her conception of the State, the very frame of her mind, the foundations of her intellectual education and her intuitive sense of right; to *Christianity* her deep idealism, which no disillusion can entirely destroy, which keeps alive her faith in herself and in her destiny after the worst of catastrophes; to the *Germans* her instinctive individualism, formerly fostered by the feudal system and today still emphatically expressed in her local particularism, in the fence close drawn round hearth and home by every French family and in the still strong dislike of the French for corporate discipline and co-operation; to her *Kings*, the assemblage of her territory; to the *Revolution* her sense of herself as a nation, her high patriotism, her passion for political liberty, almost all the constituent principles of her present public life; to the *Empire* her administrative organisation; to *her efforts in the nineteenth century* the establishment of her democracy.

The vestiges of the past

Some survivals from the diverse stages of her past will stand in visible contradiction to the main trend of her evolution; they take the shape of *reactionary ideas* and are to be met with both on the social and political planes. They are the aliment of an *opposition* which is not without utility as an implement for control and criticism of the government. Yet little by little they wither away and die out as life brings them one after another to the test.

II

The great problems of the present hour

At the present hour several great problems still remain unsolved and the manner of their solution, whatever it may be, will inevitably have much influence on the political and social life of France and upon her destinies in the world.

A. *Interior policy*

1. Amendment of the parliamentary régime

As regards her political life, these problems may be resolved into two: 1. *Her parliamentary régime needs amendment.* Her parliamentary life, as long as it was a question of founding and consolidating the Republic, has necessarily developed under the form of a party struggle *to obtain a majority* in the Electoral Colleges and the Legislative Assemblies, and the government has been, as is natural, in the hands of the majority. Since the time when the Republican principle has seemed definitely accepted, those who are anxious that the basis of national representation should be wide enough to afford an accurate reflection of the opinion of the country, have endeavoured to secure for minorities some legal means of expression.

The proportional representation

They have accordingly done their utmost to devise an electoral system which should give to the different parties a representation proportionate to their numerical importance. The opposition, on its side, has accepted the principle of a reform which would probably increase its own influence, by augmenting the number of its representatives in Parliament. After the World War a reform establishing this *proportional representation* was adopted and applied in the elections of 1919 and of 1924. Its machinery proved over-complicated and it seems to have displeased all parties alike. There is need for the adoption of a simpler system which the electors can more easily understand. The moral aim—if I may say so—envisaged by the advocates of proportional representation, is to put an end to the electoral intrigues of individuals and the huckstering in petty local politics and so, as far as possible, to subordinate the importance of persons to that of ideas and principles. It need hardly be said that politicians, more assured of the effectiveness of their own means of action upon the electors than of the excellence or popularity of their doctrines, retain their preference for the uninominal *scrutin d'arrondissement;* but others, whose chief preoccupation is to avoid giving help to the reactionaries, would be satisfied with a different arrangement namely, the election, by a majority system, of all the deputies of one department by all the electors of that department.[1]

The vote for women

One particular item in electoral reform is the grant of the vote to women. The Chamber voted in favour of this principle, but it was thrown out by the Senate. The main reason of this opposition is to be found in the fear that the Catholic Church, which has still great influence over women in many districts, would be the chief political gainer by the innovation. At the same time those among the Republicans who are least anxious to risk the experiment are agreed that the rights of women should be progressively realised in legislation. They are ready, for instance, to accord them, as a beginning, the right of municipal suffrage and to give them access to communal posts in which their practical common sense would undoubtedly do valuable service. It is remarkable that at present the warmest advocates of the vote for women are to be found among the Catholics who have great—possibly excessive—hope in the peasant women, and among the Socialists who reckon that the whole working women's vote would be cast on their side. It certainly cannot be long before the question receives a solution, in whole or in part, by some concession to feminist claims. This would have already been done if the majority of French women had shown more interest in the matter than they have so far done.

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[1] As a provisional measure, the uninominal *scrutin d'arrondissement* was re-established on the 13th of July, 1927, the main argument in its favour being the necessity of providing a governing majority.

2. Administrative reform

Position of the question

2. *A thorough administrative reform is imperative*, for the reason that government and administration are not based on the same principles and even tend to apply different political conceptions. Government rests on the sovereignty of the will of the people; that principle, though not formulated in the Constitutional Laws, is imposed by logic no less than by practical necessity, and that it is well founded is no longer contested except by the political theorists of the Church.[2] The government personnel is elected, controlled by opinion and responsible; the electorate can change it if it wishes. The administration, on the contrary, rests upon the theory, unformulated but quite definite, that the government is omnipotent. Its personnel is *co-opted* by itself under regulations which it issues and applies as it sees fit; it is free from any effective control

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[2] On this important point, *cf.* H. Brune, *La cité chrétienne d'après les enseignements pontificaux* (1923), p. 152 and *seq.*

by public opinion, whose dissatisfaction, when felt, can be expressed only by methods altogether external: articles in the newspapers or public meetings; it is responsible only to itself, since an official, in matters relating to the conduct of his official work, can be brought before administrative jurisdiction only within the administration, being thus outside the jurisdiction of the courts of common law. On one side power comes from below, on the other it comes from above.

The reason for this curious anomaly is that the successive governments which France has experienced, since 1815, have found convenience and profit in the organisation designed by Napoleon I to ensure that all administration shall be effectually centralised and that the State—that is to say, he himself—shall wield an authority which cannot be contravened and has no counterpoise. It is only too clear that the constituent principles of the Democratic Republic demand an administrative expression of a quite different character, and, if it may be so said, a democratisation of the administration. The question indeed is down on the agenda of the day, but the Administration, which has no difficulty in convincing itself that it has in itself the reason of its own existence, though this existence can be justified only by practical public service, brings little good will or energy to the task of effecting a transformation which would diminish its initiative and destroy its autonomy.

3. Excessive centralisation

Further still, *administrative centralisation is clearly too stringent*. It is another instance of the difficulty already mentioned; the "department," in fact, is still organised on lines which go straight back to Napoleon. And the day of the department is over; under modern developments in ways and means of communication, administrative areas of so small an extent have become an unprofitable survival. Now, when national unity is firmly established and quite unquestionable, there can be no doubt whatever that *a revival of regionalism* would be advantageous no less to the solidarity of economic interests than to that of the intellectual and artistic originality of the diverse "*pays*" of France. The first step called for, according to a view which has many adherents, is the abolition of arrondissements and departments and the division of the country into large administrative areas—about twenty altogether. A campaign to effect this great transformation has been long in progress; it is opposed by inveterate habit, by the Administration itself, alarmed by the prospect of so radical a change, and by functionaries who fear the loss of their posts; for this reason the abolition of sub-prefects, repeatedly suggested, by budgetary methods—that is to say, by the refusal of the credits which provide for their salaries—has not yet been accepted.[3] For the rest, *a reduction in the number of functionaries* is also an essential point in the hoped-for administrative reforms.

Need of new administrative division of the country

B. *Social life*

The *Fourth Estate*

In the social field, the distinguishing feature of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth is the entry into line and the organisation of the *Fourth Estate;* that is to say, of the working classes. For them economic preoccupations on the whole take precedence over political action. In other words, politics are to them *a means* rather than *an end*. The great problem to which they call attention in France, as everywhere else, is that of the best organisation to be given to labour in society, the destruction of the oppressive power of capital, and the more equitable distribution of wealth and its attendant benefits.

The proposed social solutions

Several conflicting solutions are proposed. 1. There is that of *evolution by social legislation* which is to introduce improvements with due prudence and circumspection as they appear opportune; a certain number of laws (in regard to the labour of women and children, pensions for the aged, the eight-hour day and the like) have already made some first steps on this path of progressive social reform. 2. There is that of *social revolution*, which, on some *Great Day*, is to overthrow the *bourgeois régime* and to replace it by collectivism, communism or anarchism. The different parties, who are loud in favour of this operation, do not agree among themselves either as to the methods to be adopted for its execution, or as to the form of organisation to be set on foot in the dawn after the *Great Day*.

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[3] In the last months of 1926, some sub-prefect posts and some courts have been suppressed. It may be the beginning—a somewhat timid one—of the wished-for reform.

The idea of Social Revolution

By many Socialists the *Social Revolution* and the prospects it offers are what the "kingdom of God" and the hopes it held out were to the Jews at the time of Jesus Christ—a stimulus and an ideal. Trade-Unionism works for practical achievement on the plane of reality and legality, but the bids made for support at elections, the very excitement of Trades-Union work, the illusions so easily excited in men unaccustomed to analyse the complexities of questions and, even more, the opposition, not always easy to justify in reason and equity, of those who profit by inequality, occasionally give to the struggles on the social battlefield a disquieting bitterness and violence. It must not, in any case, be forgotten that in spite of the process known as the *drift to the towns*, the peasants greatly preponderate over the industrial workers and that to the peasants Socialist ideas, in no matter what form, are not sympathetic. The *sound common sense* which is still one of the chief characteristics of the French people, is a corrective to the influence upon it of the dreams of social mysticism and the suggestions of a revolutionary metaphysic.

Economic crisis

The Great War has left behind it an economic and financial situation of great difficulty; its liquidation will probably be long and complicated, possibly painful, yet in the end it will be successful; the resources of France are great and her people shrink from no labour. Her credit has suffered a depreciation which is perhaps not altogether just. And it may be worth while to point out that not one of all the peoples plunged into that terrible struggle has shown, since it laid down its arms, more wisdom, calm and balance, not one has passed through fewer internal crises either disturbing or dangerous.

The problem of the birth-rate

Far more disquieting at present is the *problem of the birth-rate.* Many of its attendant complications will undoubtedly disappear with the advance in knowledge of hygiene among the lower classes which now suffer most from their effects; such as *infant* mortality, which is still far too high, or *drink*, which still seriously ravages the circles of urban workers, particularly in the northern half of our territory and in several country districts, such as Normandy and Brittany. But it seems hard to find a remedy for the principal evil, the insufficient number of births. None, at any rate, has so far been found and all palliatives which have been tried have proved ineffective.

C. *The situation abroad*

What makes this low rate of increase particularly dangerous is the growth in the population of Germany, which places at the disposal of that country "*a human raw material*" which is a continually increasing source of power. The war which ended in 1918 has far from given France definite security against the peril which, in 1914, led her to the verge of disaster. As long as she fails to achieve security on the Rhine, she will be obliged to keep on her guard, to burden her budget with the crushing weight of defensive armaments, to waste for long months the energies of each rising generation in the labour of military preparation. She realises already that her life depends upon her vigilance. This state of things will last as long as the world has not been taught peace; as long as mankind has not, in the sincerity of its heart, given up armed forces as the settlement of divided political and economic interests; as long as the proscribing of war has not really become the intangible and sovereign principle of the whole of international politics. This is no enviable situation for a nation which, having long lost all taste for adventure by war and all desire for conquest, aspires only to repair in peace and by toil fortunes which not long ago were the boast of all Europe and, on the lines which her past has laid down for her, to work out her destiny among mankind.

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